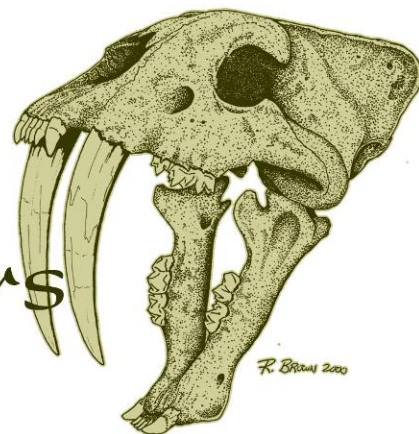


# NEWS

## Florida Fossil Hunters



Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc. dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters  
Volume 23, Number 2

February 2013

### *Desk of the President....*

Alex Kittle gave a great presentation at our January meeting on the fossils and formation of the Suwannee Limestone. Alex is now an assistant curator of invertebrates with the Florida Museum of Natural History. Working with Roger Portell at FLMNH, he's done a lot for Florida paleontology and is always a welcome guest. He had some samples of *R. goodlii* echinoids for members to take home and some interesting fossils for us to look at.... especially the beautiful ammonite/nautilus fossils from the Withalacoochee River.

Saturday, Jan. 26th was the grand opening of the FLMNH Titanoboa exhibit. Bonnie & I set up a display of fossils on a couple tables and, along with various members of the Museum staff who had displays from the collections and reptiles - alive and not -, we entertained the visitors who came to the event.

Our club is having a trip to the Florida Museum of Natural History on February 16th. Mark your calendars. This will be instead of a meeting in February. The club is paying the fee for the members to see the Titanoboa exhibit. If you haven't seen the show on TV or the DVD, you will be totally amazed at the size of this monster. After we tour the exhibit, we'll walk down the Hall of Fossils and discuss whatever you like. Directions, how to sign up, and time to be there are inside the newsletter.

On March 9th we have a picnic at Vulcan planned... details inside this newsletter. Please let Bonnie know how many in your family are going to participate so we have enough hot dogs.

Also in March is the annual Orlando Science Center Fossil Fest. This year it's on Sunday, March 17th. Bonnie and I will bring most of the fossils and casts and we need as many of you to volunteer as possible. This is a great opportunity to share your enthusiasm for fossils and the wonders of paleontology with other folks. This is a fun way to earn fossil bucks....\$100 for each hour you volunteer. It's also one of the ways we say "thank you" to the Science Center for letting us meet there. You can email or phone Bonnie to sign up (see inside).

We've got a lot of exciting things to do these next couple months.... see you there.

Russell Brown  
President

Thanks.  
Russell Brown, President  
Florida Fossil Hunters

***Vulcan Mine  
Field Trip  
Feb 9, 2013***  
More Info Page 6

***No Feb Mtg  
Join us for  
the Museum  
Field Trip***  
More Info Page 2-3

### Coming Events

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS at the Orlando Science Center**

**February 16**  
Museum Field Trip  
*No February Club Mtg*

**March 17**  
OSC Fossil Fest  
*No March Club Mtg*

***Time to renew your  
Florida Fossil Hunter  
Membership***

***More events listed on back page***

*For more info...*

[www.floridafossilhunter.com](http://www.floridafossilhunter.com)

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# Florida Fossil Hunters News

# Fragments

## RENEWAL

2013 club dues must be paid for your household to participate in the Vulcan dig and the tour through the Titanoboa exhibit, and to continue to receive the club newsletter.

### ***Titanoboa Exhibit - Club Trip***

Titanoboa: Monster Snake | Jan. 26 - Aug. 11, 2013

Florida Museum of Natural History scientists recently discovered 60-million-year-old remains of the largest snake in the world, *Titanoboa cerrejonensis*, in a Colombian coal mine. Measuring 48 ft. long and weighing 2,500 lbs., this massive predator could crush and devour a crocodile. Featuring a full-scale model of *Titanoboa* and clips from a Smithsonian Channel documentary, the exhibition delves into the discovery, reconstruction and implications of this enormous reptile. Fossil plants and other animals found at the site also reveal the earliest known rain forest, teeming with life and dating to the Paleocene, the lost world that followed the demise of the dinosaurs.

**Instead of a February meeting**, the Florida Fossil Hunters will get a guided tour of the *Titanoboa* exhibit at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville on Saturday, February 16th. We hope to have a guided tour of the Hall of Fossils as well. (If not, we can all go through the Fossil Hall on our own. They are constantly updating and changing the displays..... there is always something new to learn). There also is an excellent exhibit on Pre-historic Florida with Indian artifacts on display. You can visit the Butterfly exhibit for a small fee while you are there. For more info on the exhibits, go to [flmnh.ufl.edu](http://flmnh.ufl.edu)

We'll meet in front of the Museum at 9:30 am to sign in and get our name tags. At 10 am we'll start the tour. Please be on time. Kids and adults can participate in this trip, but your 2013 dues must be paid since the club is going to pay the exhibit fee for everyone who participates. Of course, donations to the Museum are always welcome.

Directions to the Florida Museum of Natural History, Powell Hall, 3215 Hull Rd., Gainesville, FL: Take I-75 to exit 384. Go east on SR 24 (Archer Rd.) Go about 1 mi., then turn left onto SR 121 (SW 34th St.) Go north 3/4 mile and then turn right onto Hull Rd. The entrance to the parking lots for the museums will be on your right. Parking is free on the weekends.

If you haven't signed up, you can get on the list by emailing Bonnie at [bonnierussell62@gmail.com](mailto:bonnierussell62@gmail.com) or calling her at 352-429-1058.



## Kids' Fossil Blast

With all the activities happening the next few months, there won't be an opportunity for our usual Kids' Fossil Blast. We'll have info on the website and in the newsletter when we do schedule one.

We do hope the kids participate in the February trip to the Museum in Gainesville, the Orlando Science Center's Fossil Fest on March 17th, and the picnic at Vulcan on March 9th.

### ***Are Your Kids into Geology?***

The Florida Museum of Natural History is having a special event on Saturday, March 16th from 10 am to 3 pm. It will feature volcano and earthquake demos, gem displays, and more. The best part is that it's FREE! For more info, go to [flmnh.ufl.edu](http://flmnh.ufl.edu)

You could make this a Geology and Fossil weekend with your kids... The museum event on Saturday and the Orlando Science Center's Fossil Fest on Sunday, March 17th.

### ***Vulcan March Picnic***

We'll have a club picnic at Vulcan on Saturday, March 9th. We'll have fun hunting for fossils and then eat around noon. We ask that everyone participating bring a covered dish to share..... salads, desserts, chips, etc. The club will provide hot dogs and the fixings. Bring your own drinks.

To sign up, email Bonnie at [bonnierussell62@gmail.com](mailto:bonnierussell62@gmail.com) or call her at 352-429-1058. Reminder, 2013 dues must be paid to participate.

### ***Piece on the Peace***

The Peace River's level has been below 5 ft. at the Zolfo measuring station all during January. This translates to great conditions for fossil hunting especially on the nice warm days we've had this winter. You can check the water level before you go by clicking on the link on our web page.

The club's annual dig on the Peace has been tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 20th. More details will be in future newsletters.

**Orlando Science Center Fossil Fest**

This year's annual Fossil Fest at the Orlando Science Center will be on Sunday, March 17th, from 10 am to 4 pm. This is an educational event where we get to pair up with the Science Center to showcase the wonders of Paleontology, especially Florida's. We've reserved 13 tables to display fossils and to have activities for kids. Please volunteer your time for this event. It's a great way to introduce people to the rich fossil history of Florida and the fun of collecting. Most folks in the area have no idea that a club like ours exist and would be thrilled to discover like-minded people. Remember how great it was to discover you weren't the only person in Orlando who loved to learn about the ancient past? ... and that you could actually get out and play in the dirt?

In addition to the displays, we'll have Chris DeLorey from the Brevard Zoo giving a presentation on his fossiling adventures and Russell will give one on the Pine Hills site. We'd like to have you kids from the Fossil Blasts volunteer to hand out shark teeth and explain a few fossils to the folks who come to the event.

The Science Center will have activities and other organizations with displays, too.

To volunteer, email Bonnie at [bonnierussell62@gmail.com](mailto:bonnierussell62@gmail.com) or call her at [352-429-1058](tel:352-429-1058). You get \$100 in Fossil Bucks for each hour you volunteer, which can be used at our June Fossil Bucks Auction. *This event will be instead of a regular March meeting for the Florida Fossil Hunters.*

**Venice Shark Tooth Festival**

The 2013 Festival will be held April 12th - 14th. The hours are: Friday 4 - 9 pm, Saturday 10 am - 9 pm, Sunday 10 am - 5 pm. There are shark teeth and fossil vendors as well as lots of arts and crafts booths. You can get all kinds of food and enjoy the music of the live bands while you eat. There are kids' activities, too. While you're in Venice, you can go to the beach and hunt for your own fossil shark teeth.... hint - they are generally black in color.

Cost is \$3 for adults and kids under 12 can get in free.

Directions: From Sarasota take Rt. 41 south to the Rt. 41 Venice bypass. Look for the signs on Rt. 41 along the bypass directing you to the Venice Municipal Airport festival grounds. For more info, check out [www.escape-to-sarasota.com/venice-sharks-tooth-festival](http://www.escape-to-sarasota.com/venice-sharks-tooth-festival)

**Time to Renew Your Florida Fossil Hunter Membership**

It's a great bargain..... you get to attend free presentations, go on field trips, and hang around with people who are as interested in strange rocks as you are. And it's still only \$17 per household!

Just download the application on our website or pick up one at our meetings and enter your current info. PLEASE print clearly.... the email addresses are unusual enough without having to guess if that figure is a G or a 6. Make checks out to Florida Fossil Hunters and give it to the membership folks or mail it to P.O. Box 540404, Orlando, FL 32854

## Earliest Sea Cow Ancestors Originated in Africa, Lived in Fresh Water

*Jan. 16, 2013* — A new fossil discovered in Tunisia represents the oldest known ancestor of modern-day sea cows, supporting the African origins of these marine mammals. The find is described in research published January 16 in the open access journal *PLOS ONE* by Julien Benoit and colleagues from the University of Science and Technology in Montpellier, France.

Some fossils of sea cow ancestors have been found in Jamaica, but the Tunisian fossil is more primitive and pre-dates these, revealing an older ancestor for sea cows that emerged at the same time as other modern mammals. Unlike whales and dolphins, the evolutionary origins of the sea cow family have been obscure.

They share an ancestor with elephants, and it is thought that their oldest relatives were terrestrial animals that gradually adapted to an aquatic life. The last common ancestor of the two species may have lived in freshwater swamps well before the time that the new species described in this study lived.

Though this specimen may not have been the common link between modern day sea cows and elephants, the authors' analyses suggest that this new species lived in fresh water, not sea waters.

*Julien Benoit, Sylvain Adnet, Essid El Mabrouk, Hayet Khayati, Mustapha Ben Haj Ali, Laurent Marivaux, Gilles Merzeraud, Samuel Merigeaud, Monique Vianey-Liaud, Rodolphe Tabuce. Cranial Remains from Tunisia Provides New Clues for the Origin and Evolution of Sirenia (Mammalia, Afrotheria) in Africa. PLoS ONE, 2013; 8 (1): e54307 DOI: [10.1371/journal.pone.0054307](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0054307)*



# FossilFest 2013

## FLORIDA'S LARGEST PREHISTORIC SHOW!

**FOSSILS & ARTIFACTS  
GEMS \* MINERALS \* SHELLS  
FOSSIL EXHIBITS  
WORKSHOPS  
KIDS GAMES \* FOSSIL MINE \* RAFFLES  
DOOR PRIZES \* SILENT AUCTION**

### **PALEO WORKSHOPS**

**Learn about Florida's prehistoric past in a FossilFest workshop! Experienced collectors will teach you how to find, identify, and preserve fossil treasures of your very own! All workshops are free to FossilFest attendees!**

#### **Saturday & Sunday**

**11AM: Discovering Florida's Fossil Treasures** with TBFC's own Dr. Bob Sinibaldi PhD. Learn where and how to find fossils of your own right here in Florida!

**12:30PM: Fossil Hunting Permits in Florida** with Dr. Richard Hulbert PhD of the Florida Museum of Natural History. It's cheap and easy! Learn how to get your fossil permit and participate in the science of paleontology.

**2PM – The Perfect Plaster Jacket & Preservation Techniques**, with Seina Searle. Learn how to successfully get fossils from the field to your lab. Jacketing, glues, and preservation techniques are discussed.



Presents the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual



**March 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Sat: 9AM–6PM, Sun: 10AM–4PM**

**Adults \$6, Kids 12 and under FREE!**

**Florida State Fairgrounds**

**Be a part of the adventure!  
Visit TBFC's membership table &  
JOIN TODAY!**

**[www.tampabayfossilclub.com](http://www.tampabayfossilclub.com)**



# *Lulu Creek - Part 10: Yesterday*

As things slowed down at Lulu Creek, I tried to learn more about the wondrous things that I had found. Reading what books were available, visiting the museums around the State, and sneaking off to Dr. Hubbell's now and again for "brain-food" and shark jaws to use for comparison.

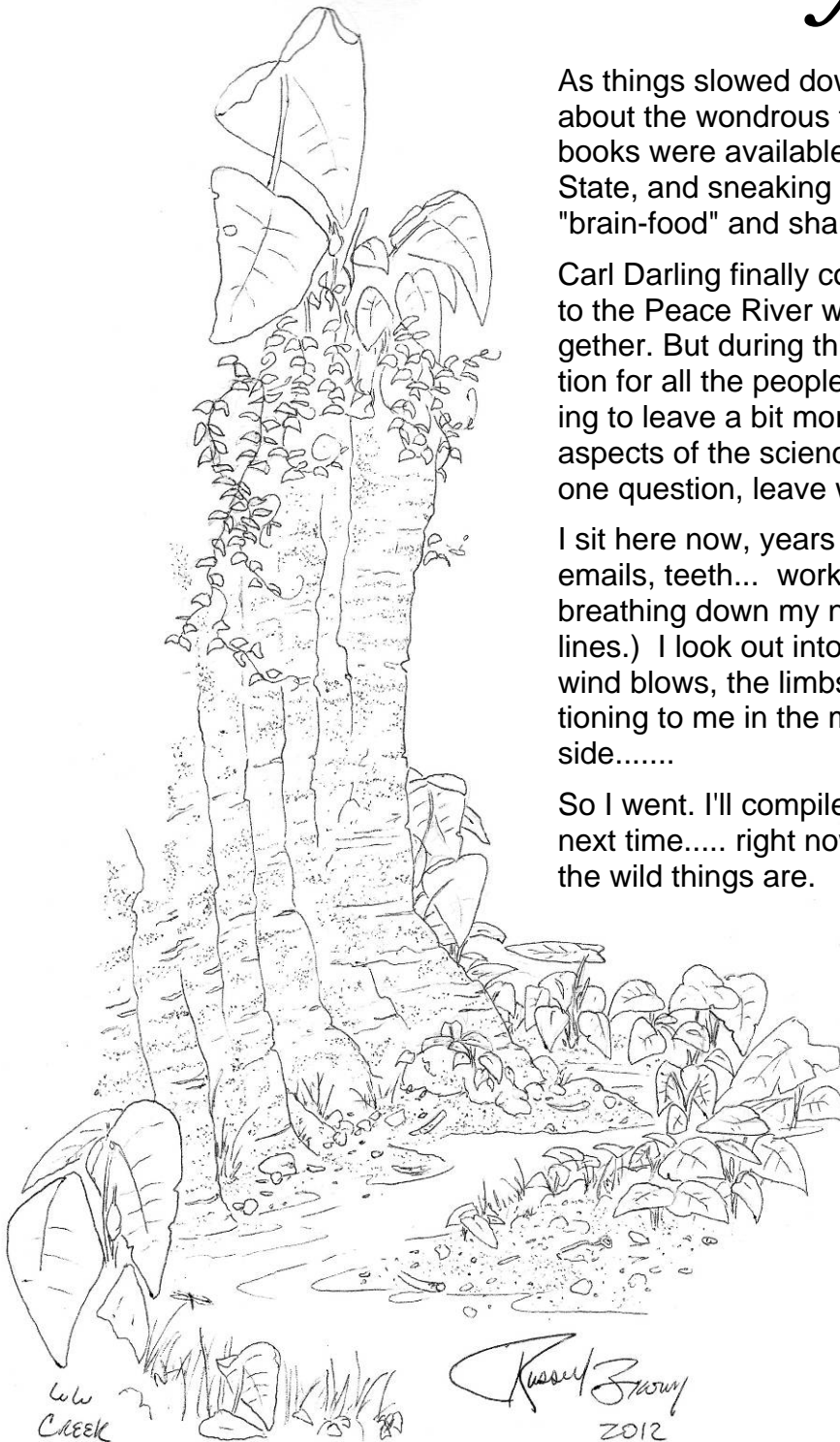
Carl Darling finally convinced the three of us to go down to the Peace River with him. That's another story altogether. But during this time I've grown a deeper appreciation for all the people who have come before me and trying to leave a bit more knowledge for the next person. All aspects of the sciences play a part in these riddles..... ask one question, leave with more.

I sit here now, years later, ...my desk covered in papers, emails, teeth... working on the newsletter. (The editor is breathing down my neck and mumbling about dead-lines.) I look out into the darkness of my backyard. As the wind blows, the limbs of the trees look like someone motioning to me in the moonlight, beckoning me to come outside.....

So I went. I'll compile a list of things from Lulu Creek the next time..... right now I need to go. Look for me where the wild things are.

Russell Brown

***Next time: What I Found***



## VULCAN MINE

### ***Vulcan Mine Field Trip near Brooksville***

**Saturday, February 9th**

Trip Leader: Steve Chambers,

*If you did not sign up at the January meeting,  
please call or email him at:*

Email: [stchamb1@comcast.com](mailto:stchamb1@comcast.com)

Cell number: 321-806-0763

This is one of the few places where kids are allowed in to fossil hunt. Be sure to stay with them since there are steep cliffs, sharp rocks, and small sinkholes.

***You MUST be a member of the club for insurance purposes to participate in this field trip.***

Meet on the driveway loop near the entrance to the Mine by 8:30 am to sign releases before we are escorted into the mine around 9 am. We get to drive our vehicles in so you can have your coolers, snacks, and equipment handy while you hunt. They usually allow us to dig until noon and sometimes people can stay till 2 pm.

All participants **MUST** be escorted into and out of the mine. Do not leave on your own since it is easy to become lost.

Directions: The trip will take approximately 2 hours from Orlando to Vulcan Mine. Be sure to allow for extra time to stop at a restroom before you get there.

**THERE ARE NO RESTROOM FACILITIES AT VULCAN**, other than the boulders and the hills.

From Orlando take Hwy. 50 west (or the 408 west to the FL Turnpike, take exit 272 and then continue west on Hwy. 50) to Brooksville. Follow 50A/98 North through Brooksville and turn right on Ponce De Leon Blvd. (Hwy 98 North). Go approximately 10 miles. Vulcan/Cemex will be on your left. The address is 16313 Ponce De Leon Blvd, Brooksville, for those of you who want to download a map.

If you follow the truck route for Hwy. 50, you have to turn right onto 41, and then take the fork to the left to hook up with Ponce De Leon Blvd/98. There are several fast food places on 41 where you can take advantage of the bathroom facilities. Be sure NOT to keep following 41 north. You want to take 98 north from Brooksville.

This is mostly surface collecting with occasionally a little digging to pry out a specimen. Bring a small trowel or screwdriver or rock hammer, and a bucket to put your fossils and rocks into. You may want to bring small containers and tissue for fragile fossils.

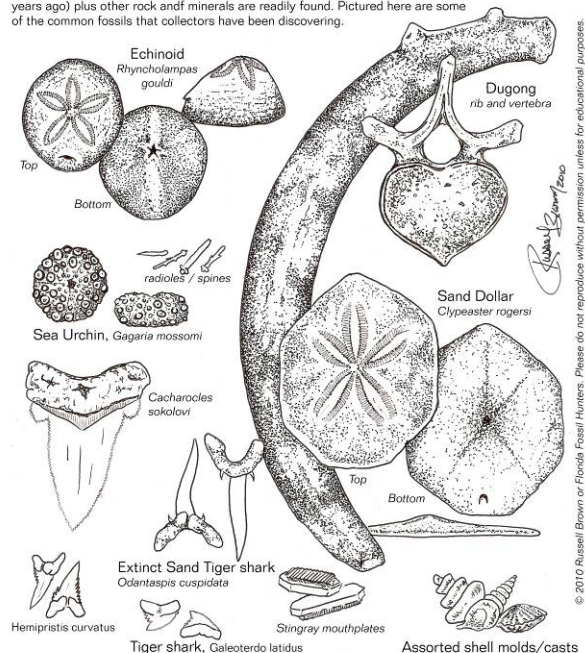
Wear a hat, sturdy shoes, long pants (some of the rocks are sharp), and sunscreen. Bring lots of water and/or drinks and some snacks or lunch to eat.

We find mostly echinoids and sometimes sea urchins, pieces of bone, or other fossils are found. We also find chert rocks. This is the material that the Indians used to make their arrowheads and tools.

*Handout below is available on the field trip.*

### **Vulcan** Materials Company

Vulcan Materials Company is North America's leading producer of construction aggregates - primarily crushed stone, sand and gravel. During the quarrying process at the Brooksville site, fossils from the Oligocene (24.5 to 37.5 million years ago) plus other rock and minerals are readily found. Pictured here are some of the common fossils that collectors have been discovering.



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# Florida Fossil Hunters

is a fun and educational group whose goal is to further our understanding of the prehistory of Florida. We encourage family participation and welcome explorers of all ages.

Membership is \$17 per year. Other household members may be included at no charge.

Meetings are usually held on the third Saturday of the month but may vary with club activities. Check the website for the date and location of the next meeting or call one of the officers.

## Officers:

President	Russell Brown	(352) 429-1058
Vice President	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Secretary	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
Treasurer	Sara Morey	(619) 302-4863

## Chairs:

Education	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
Field Trips	<b>OPEN</b>	
Fossil Fair	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Fossil Auctions	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Fossil Bucks	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Fossil Lotto	Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Auctioneer	Roy Singer	(407) 645-0200
Membership	Bonnie Cronin Nicole Barr	(352) 429-1058
Newsletter	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
	Elise Cronin-Hurley	(407) 929-6297
Photography	John Heinsen	(407) 291-7672
Webmaster	Elise Cronin-Hurley	(407) 929-6297
	elise@lisedreams.com	

## Board of Directors:

Melissa Cole	(407) 834-5615
Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Dave Cass	(407) 409-9095
Shelley Zimmerman	(407) 891-1260
Marge Fantozi	
Marcia Wright	

# Membership Application

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

Please list any interests, experience, talents or just plain enthusiasm, which you would like to offer to the club:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Membership is \$17 per year. Our membership year runs from January to December. All renewals are done in December and January.

## Please make your checks payable to:

Florida Fossil Hunters  
Post Office Box 540404  
Orlando, Florida 32854-0404

*Associate members are people in the same household, included at no extra charge, 2 adult votes per household.*

# Newsletter Policy

Articles must be submitted by the first of the month to be included in that month's newsletter. These can be mailed to the above Post Office Box or e-mailed to: elise@lisedreams.com. Articles can be sent as text in the e-mail or in Microsoft Word files (.doc or .docx).

*Please note in subject of email 'FFH'.*

**Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc.**  
**dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters**

# Florida Fossil Hunters News

# Florida Fossil Hunters Mark Your Calendar

## **February 9**

Vulcan Mine Field Trip

## **February 16**

FLMNH & Titanoboa  
*No February Club Mtg*

## **March 9**

Vulcan Mine Field Trip & Picnic

## **March 17**

OSC Fossil Fest  
*No March Club Mtg*

## **March 23 & 24**

Tampa Bay club Fossil Fair

## **April (date TBA)**

Peace River Field Trip

## **April 12, 13, 14**

Venice Shark Tooth Festival

## **April 27 & 28**

Cen. Fl. Mineral & Gem show

### **Be Green**

Email Bonnie at [bjrb48@netzero.com](mailto:bjrb48@netzero.com) to receive the newsletter via email.



Join Our Facebook group, Search:

[Florida Fossil Hunters](#)

**facebook**

Visit us online at [www.floridafossilhunters.com](http://www.floridafossilhunters.com)

Articles and comments should be sent to: [elise@liseydreams.com](mailto:elise@liseydreams.com)

## Florida Fossil Hunters

Post Office Box 540404

Orlando, Florida 32854-0404



## Florida Fossil Hunters News