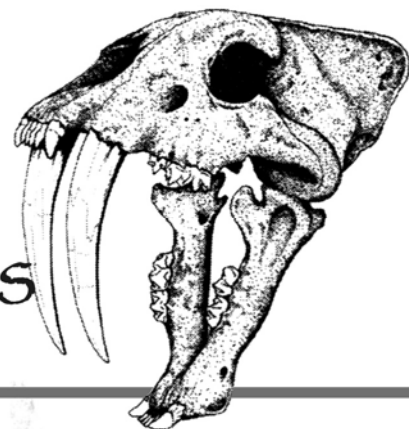


NEWS

Florida Fossil Hunters

Volume 18, Number 2

February 2008



Prez Sez:

This month we will have Grant Groves as our lecturer. He will speak on pottery types and the people that created them. It will be good!

Vulcan was cold but we had a good time with the 100 people that came from the Dixie Mineral clubs and made new friends and got to see old ones. We can return the second and third weekend in February.

The Lee county fossil club had a mine they were collecting in and I tried to get us in but now they are CLOSED! I tried. I will continue to hunt for new mines for us. If anyone has a good area to dig in Possum Creek in Gainesville let me know.

See you at the meeting!!

Shelley Zimmerman

Coming Events

**Meetings held at the
Orlando Science Center**

February 20, 2008

6:00pm Kid's Blast and
7:00pm Meeting

March 19, 2008

7:00pm Meeting

April 23, 2008

6:00pm Kid's Blast and
7:00pm Meeting

For more info...

www.floridafossilhunter.com

TIME TO RENEW

your Florida Fossil Hunters 2008 Membership.

If you haven't already paid, be sure to bring your dues and renewal form to the meeting or mail them to the post office box.



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Florida Fossil Hunters News

Fragments

Piece on the Peace

The rains have had their effect on the flow of the Peace River but it's back to under 5 feet deep at Zolfo. That is still shallow enough for you diggers and sifter. It ought to be very pleasant with the warm weather we've been having, too.

Volunteer Diggers Wanted

The Florida Museum of Natural History has a Winter Dig Session scheduled from January 12th through February 29th at the Haille Quarry near Newberry. You must be at least 18yrs old to participate.

No experience is neededthere is on-the-job training and they provide the tools. For further info and to submit an application go to: flmnh.ufl.edu

Fossil Reproductions

Several folks asked Russell and I where we got the T-Rex tooth replica. So for all those interested the web site is: www.valleyanatomical.com

Orlando Science Center's Fossilfest

The Science Center will hold its Fossilfest from 11 am to 4 pm on Saturday, March 15th and Sunday, March 16th.

This is a great opportunity for our club members to educate the public about fossils and our club while also showing the Science Center our appreciation for allowing us to meet at the museum.

Shelley, Valerie, Russell and some others have already volunteered to bring in real fossils, replicas and minerals. We need more people to sign up to help explain what the fossils are and how they fit into the natural history of Florida.

Please volunteer some of your time at this event.

More info on Florida Museum Science projects....

Florida Natural History Museum scientists engage in research around the world every day, but only a small number of these discoveries are displayed in the public exhibits space. They have instituted a "Science Stories" site which is an ongoing collection of news articles about Florida Museum natural science research. One recent article details the findings at Haile Quarry.

Go to the link at www.flmnh.ufl.edu to view the articles.

Museum Project Approved

The membership at the January, 2008 meeting overwhelmingly approved the motion for our club to work with the Orlando Science Center in updating their fossil displays by donating and lending fossils and/or fossil replicas. A cost of up to \$2,000.00 for this project was approved as part of this motion.

The first phase is in progress and consists of a marine fossil display. The fossils on display will be loaned from the collections of Jeremy Smith, Russell Brown and Bonnie Cronin.

If you have items which you would like to loan or donate for future displays, please contact Bonnie Cronin or Russell Brown at bjrb48@netzero.com.



Kids' Fossil Blast

Those fossils aren't just silent lumps of rock and bone --- they have tales to tell. Join us at our February session as we explore some of their stories. Our next meeting of the Kids Fossil Blast will be on Wednesday, February 20th, at 6:00 pm before our regular meeting.

The Kids' Fossil Blast is a fun, hands-on way to find out about fossils for kids mainly ages 4 to 14 yrs. Each meeting we focus on a different type of fossil using real fossils, replicas and printed materials. Sometimes the kids even get to take real fossils home. We meet every other month at 6:00 pm at the Orlando Science Center.

Vulcan Mine

Vulcan Mine Field Trip

Be sure to join us on Sat., Feb. 16th and Sun., Feb. 17th at the mine. There are still lots of echinoids and crystals to be found. Be sure to be at the entrance by 8:30 am.

Call Shelley Zimmerman at 407-891-1260 to sign up.

Vulcan Mine Field Trips

We will be having field trips to Vulcan Mine near Brooksville on the third Saturday and Sunday each month, until further notice. Be at the circular driveway near the entrance by 8:45 am to be escorted in by the Vulcan Mine personnel. Generally we dig until noon but sometimes later.

Fossil hunting at this site is usually surface collecting but there can be digging involved if bones or rocks crystals are found.

Bring water, snacks, hat, sturdy shoes, spade or small shovel and a bucket for collecting your finds.

Directions: West on Highway 50 to Brooksville. Turn right onto State Road 19 and go north approximately 10 miles. Vulcan Mine will be on the left.

For further info or to sign up call Shelley Zimmerman at 407-891-1260.



Above Shelley and Dave with the pry bar working on Shelley's rock and Dave cutting "the rock" into more manageable pieces. *Thanks Paul for the pictures.*

Brazil finds fossil of crocodile 'missing link'

RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - Brazilian paleontologists Thursday unveiled a fossil of a creature that they said is the "missing link" between prehistoric and present-day crocodiles.

Called "Montealtosuchus arrudacamposi," the predator measured 1.5-1.7 meters (56-64 inches), weighed about 40 kilograms (88 pounds) and lived in the late Cretaceous Period (80-85 million years ago) in the region of Palo Alto, in Sao Paulo state.

Federal University of Rio de Janeiro paleontologist Felipe de Vasconcellos, who helped research the fossil found in 2004, said the reptile's physical characteristics placed it between prehistoric crocodiles and their current descendants.

It lived on dry land and was quick on its feet, instead of living in marshlands and spending most of its time under water, he said.

"Its nostrils were at the front (of its snout). If it went in the water it had to keep its head erect making it an easy target for other predators. Its eyes were placed laterally, like other land-walking animals," Vasconcellos said.

He said these characteristics made the Montealtosuchus arrudacamposi the "missing link" of crocodiles.

The discovery could also lead paleontologists to revise theories that place the origin of crocodiles in the northern hemisphere, where no fossils of such

"intermediary" species have been found, he added.

"Perhaps the origin of crocodiles around the entire world was in the south and not in North America or Europe as it was always believed," Vasconcellos told reporters.



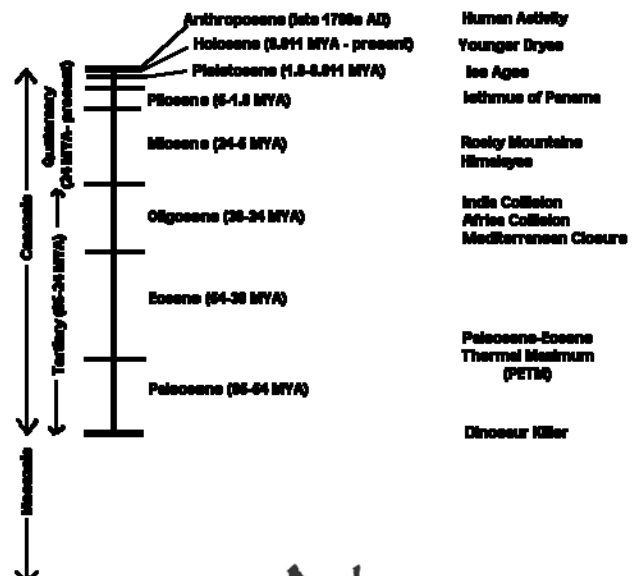
A life-size reproduction of a Montealtosuchus Arrudacamposi from the Late Cretaceous is displayed during a presentation at the Rio de Janeiro Federal University. The specimen, found in the strata of the Bauru Basin, center of Brazil, was exquisitely preserved with skull, mandible, postcranial and exoskeletal elements in articulation that provides critical information of the anatomy of this group.

"They may have first appeared in South America or Africa, when they were fused together in a single continent. That would change the way an entire species has propagated."

Is It Time for a New Epoch?

Geologists from the University of Leicester propose that humankind has so altered the Earth that it has brought about the end of one epoch, the Holocene, of Earth's history and marked the start of a new one - the Anthropocene.

The researchers argue that the dominance of humans has so physically changed the earth by transforming patterns of sediment erosion, causing major changes in the carbon cycles and making wholesale changes to the world's plants and animals that there is increasingly less justification for linking pre- and post-industrialized Earth in the same epoch.



Looks Like a Tree Fossil but Acted Like a Fungus, Researchers Discover

Among fossils, few are stranger than that of Prototaxites, which lived about 400 million years ago. The fossils are like tree trunks — about 3 feet in diameter and up to 25 feet long — but Prototaxites is unlike any known tree, living or extinct. In fact, it is unlike most anything, and scientists have never been sure if it was a lichen, a giant alga, a fungus or something else entirely.

Now isotopic analysis of fossils from Ontario and Quebec strongly suggest that "giant fungus" is the proper description. The analysis, by C. Kevin Boyce of the University of Chicago and colleagues, shows that Prototaxites probably dined off other living things, as a fungus would. The findings are published in the journal *Geology*.

The researchers looked at concentrations of carbon isotopes in the fossils. Isotopic concentrations in some fossils, for example, approximated those in



fossil plants from the same area, indicating that Prototaxites consumed land plants. Other fossils from other locations had different concentrations of isotopes, and in those cases, the researchers suggest, the fungus may have consumed microbes in soil crusts.

Your Inner Tadpole

Evolution describes change in body structures over time in response to environmental pressures.

SO WHY HICCUPS?

"Hiccups seem to be controlled by their own pattern generator in the brain stem: stimulate it, and you stimulate hiccups. It turns out this pattern generator is virtually identical to one found in amphibians - and not just any amphibians, but specifically in tadpoles. Tadpoles use both lungs and gills to breathe, and this pattern generator is active when they breathe with gills. In that circumstance, a tadpole needs to pump water into its mouth and throat and then out across the gills, but it must also prevent the water from entering its lungs. To keep out the water, it closes the glottis, the flap that can seal off the breathing tube. The closing of this flap is what causes the sound of the "hic" in humans. The central pattern generator in the tadpole brain stem ensures that an inspiration is followed immediately by a closing glottis. They can breathe with their gills thanks to an extended form of hiccup."

Taken from the book "Your Inner Fish: A Journey into the 3.5-Billion-Year History of the Human Body" by Neil Shubin.

FOSSILFEST 2008

Florida 10,000 B.C.

TAMPA, FLORIDA, February 1, 2008 - Before everything we know, prehistoric people hunted mammoths, built large pyramid mounds along our coast, and lived in fear of the saber cat, lion, and bear. On March 8th and 9th, 2008 the Florida State Fairgrounds Special Events Center will go back in time to a different land, when the Tampa Bay Fossil Club presents, Florida, 10,000 B.C.!

FossilFest is one of Florida's largest prehistoric shows where the public can view countless fossils found right here in Florida, as well as artifacts from Florida's prehistoric people. FossilFest features educational activities for both children and adults designed to teach the public about Florida's exciting prehistoric past when saber-toothed cats, giant wolves, sharks the size of school buses, and cavemen ruled Florida's peninsula. Gems, minerals and fossil shells, will also be on display. Vendors will be on hand to sell and trade fossils found both here in Florida, and from all over the world.

"Our goal is to teach Floridians about the animals and prehistoric people that were here long before us," says club president Michael Searle. "These mammoths and lions and camels and rhinos lived right here where we live today. Their fossil remains are everywhere in Florida."

On both Saturday and Sunday there will be presentations on Florida's Ice Age fossils and prehistoric people. There will also be seminars where FossilFest attendees can learn how to legally hunt for Florida fossils, identify what they find, and learn preservation techniques for these antiquities.

One of the highlights of FossilFest is the children's "Fossil Mine." Kids will have the opportunity to dig through a sand pit to recover authentic fossils donated by Tampa Bay Fossil Club members. It doesn't end there, club members then accompany the children to the "learning table" where they will have their fossils

explained, identified and bagged for the ride home. That's right, the kids will get to keep everything they find!

"It's a wonderful "hands-on" learning experience for the children," says Tampa Bay Fossil Club Director and Hillsborough County school teacher, Patrick McGirk. "You just can't believe how excited these kids get over fossils. They don't even realize they're learning!"

There will be free door prizes, silent auctions, and raffle prizes throughout the weekend.

"So many people these days are hooked on the Discovery Channel and the History Channel and the Learning Channel. Well, that's what we're all about," says Dr. Bob Sinibaldi, a former president of the Tampa Bay Fossil Club and Pinellas County school teacher. "FossilFest will appeal to anyone who frequents the Discovery Channel, loves science and nature, or has an interest in history and outdoor adventure."

FossilFest hours are from 9AM until 6PM on Saturday, and 9AM until 4PM on Sunday. Admission is \$5.00 for adults, children 12 and under are free. The Ice Age returns!

Where: Florida State Fairgrounds,
Special Events Center

When: March 8th and 9th 2008

Time: Saturday 9AM-6PM,
Sunday 9AM - 4PM

Please visit us at www.tampabayfossilclub.com

Michael Searle
(813) 909-9358 - Home
(813) 300-6129 - Cell
fossilnerd@juno.com

Florida Fossil Hunters News

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 held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm, check the website for the location.

Officers:

President	Shelley Zimmerman	(407) 891-1260
Vice President	Paul Bordenkircher	(407) 687-3843
Secretary		
Treasurer	Sara Morey	(407) 353-8675

Chairs:

Education	Melissa Cole	(407) 834-5615
Field Trips	Shelley Zimmerman	(407) 891-1260
Fossil Fair	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Fossil Auctions	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Fossil Bucks	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Fossil ID Table	Andreas Kerner, intlffossils@msn.com	
Fossil Lotto	Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Auctioneer	Roy Singer	(407) 645-0200
Historian	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Librarian	Kathy Munroe	(407) 846-7382
Membership	Melissa Cole	(407) 834-5615
	Joanne Maio	(407) 375-3635
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@liseydreams.com	

Board of Directors:

Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Jeremy Smith	(407) 293-9391
Roy Singer	(407) 645-0200
Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Tom Tomlinson	(407) 290-8474

Membership Application

Names: _____

Associate Members: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: Zip: _____

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@liseydreams.com. Articles can be sent as text in the e-mail or in Microsoft Word files (*.doc).

Florida Fossil Hunters News

Florida Fossil Hunters Mark Your Calendar

February 16th and 17th

Vulcan Mine Field Trips

February 20, 2008

Next Kid's Fossil Blast Meeting 6:00pm | Florida Fossil Hunters Meeting 7:00pm

Tampa Bay Fossil Club, 2008 Fossilfest at the Florida State Fairgrounds.

Saturday, March 8th from 9 am to 6 pm and Sunday, March 9th from 9 am to 4 pm

See page 6 for more info

Orlando Science Center Fossilfest

11 am to 4 pm Saturday, March 15th and Sunday, March 16th, *see page 2 for more info.*

March 19, 2008

Florida Fossil Hunters Meeting 7:00pm

April 23, 2008

Next Kid's Fossil Blast Meeting 6:00pm | Florida Fossil Hunters Meeting 7:00pm

Visit us online at www.floridafossilhunters.com

Articles and comments should be sent to: elise@liseydreams.com

Florida Fossil Hunters

Post Office Box 540404

Orlando, Florida 32854-040



Florida Fossil Hunters News