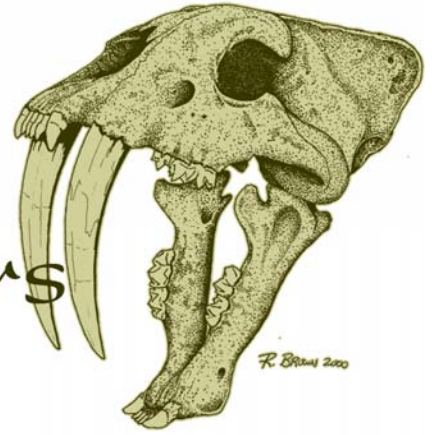


# NEWS

## Florida Fossil Hunters



Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc. dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters  
Volume 22, Number 6

June 2012

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

Hope this newsletter finds you ready for a great summer. If you took my advice, you're reading this standing in the Peace River somewhere.

At the May meeting - for those who couldn't attend - we had our 1st Kids Only Fossil Auction. All bidders went home with two treasures.

Dr. Bob Sinibaldi gave us a great presentation based on his latest book "What Your Fossils Can Tell You" and afterwards signed copies for members. You are never too old to learn something new and I'm getting a lot of good info from this book, including a few things I had never even thought about before. It's like Dr. Bob said, "You'll come away with a fresh perspective on the fossils that you've found." If you missed out on this opportunity, check out the info on the following pages on how to contact him to get that book and his others, too.

In June, we'll have our club's Fossil Bucks Auction (for adults). As always, I also ask that you bring in anything you've found since the last meeting you attended, including the unidentifiable ones. We all like to see and learn.

This year, the club will NOT be having a July meeting or picnic. Nor will there be a newsletter. We all have off of "Club duties" to go out and play. I hope you get out and do some exploring and enjoying the real Florida.

Russell Brown  
President

**JUNE 16 MTG  
& Auction**  
*List info on Page 6*

**NO JULY  
MTG OR  
NEWSLETTER**

**AUG 18 MTG  
Speaker  
Valerie First**

## Coming Events

### UPCOMING MEETINGS at the Orlando Science Center

#### **June 16, 2012**

2:00pm Kid's Fossil Blast  
3:00pm Club Mtg and  
Adult Auction

#### **No July Meeting or Newsletter**

#### **August 18th**

2pm Kids' Fossil Blast  
3pm Meeting and speaker:  
Valerie First

#### **September 15th**

3pm Meeting

**More events listed on back page**

*For more info...*

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

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# Fragments

## **Dr. Bob's Books**

You can contact Dr. Bob Sinibaldi at [mbsinibaldi@aol.com](mailto:mbsinibaldi@aol.com) to order his books:

"What Your Fossils Can Tell You", "The Handbook of Paleontological Terms", and "Fossil Diving"

Thank you, Dr. Bob, for the wonderful presentation. We look forward to having you back to learn more.

<http://floridapaleosociety.com>

## **FFH Fossil Fair, October 13 and 14**

Mark this on all your calendars! We're working on getting volunteers signed up early. You can contact Ron Wittschen, our Volunteer Coordinator, at [redbear@rwittschen.com](mailto:redbear@rwittschen.com) to sign up. We'll also have sign up sheets at our meetings.

We also need people to volunteer to take care of the Silent Auction station and work with the Boy/Cub Scouts this year. If you are interested in helping with those areas, please contact Bonnie at [bjrb48@netzero.com](mailto:bjrb48@netzero.com)

## **Members going the extra mile...**

Sara Morey, Marge Fantozzi, and Marcia Wright spent a couple days helping Roger Portell at the Florida Museum of Natural History to unpack a recently acquired collection from North Carolina.

Dave Dunaway volunteered a day with a troop of Boy Scouts in finding fossils in Peace River.

Have you gone the extra mile? I know some of you give presentations at schools or organizations. Let us know about it. Email Bonnie at [bjrb48@netzero.com](mailto:bjrb48@netzero.com)

## **Monster Snake coming to Gainesville**

An exhibition featuring the Titanoboa, the prehistoric 48 ft. long snake that lived in Columbia in the Paleocene will be opening on January 26, 2013. We'll have details and perhaps arrangements for a club trip to see it as the date nears.

## **Good News for Daytona Beach Museum**

The Museum of Arts and Sciences has been awarded a \$4.379 million FEMA grant to help rebuild the west wing which was damaged by flooding in 2009. That grant along with \$1.6 from Volusia County will make the rebuilding a reality. The west wing housed the Natural History exhibits including the sloth and glyptodont skeletons.

They will debut their mastodon finds at their "Natural History and Day of the Mastodon" on Saturday, Sept. 29th from 11 am to 4 pm. Florida Fossil Hunters will be a participant with fossil displays as well.



# Kids' Fossil Blast

The first Kids Only Fossil Bucks Auction was a good example of enthusiastic competitive bidding. Each child ended up with two treasures to take home as reward for attending meetings, field trips, and volunteering.

There will be a Kids' session at 2 pm before our Saturday meeting on June 16th. We will investigate the evolution of limbs in all their many forms and try to figure out why they are so different.

## **National Fossil Day, October 17th**

FPS will hold a "Fossils in the Fort" to celebrate this day sponsored by the National Park Service. It will be at the Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine. You can learn more about it at the FPS Fossil Day website:

<http://floridapaleosociety.com>

## **Brevard Zoo**

Even though the dinosaur exhibit has moved on, this is still a great place to visit. Where else can you see the living capybaras, tapirs, anteaters, etc. instead of just finding their fossil teeth or bones? There are also fun activities such as kayaking, feeding giraffes, zip-lining in the canopy, and playing in the water park for the little ones.

For us budget-minded people, the Zoo is again having its Summer Saturday Nights from June 2nd through July 28th. Admission is just \$5 per person from 5 pm to 9 pm. (last admission is at 8 pm). This is a great way to enjoy the Zoo and avoid the heat. For more info go to [www.brevardzoo.org](http://www.brevardzoo.org)

## **Cruisin' the Fossil Highway**

Florida Museum of Natural History

Feb. 4th to Sept. 3, 2012

Explore questions about evolution, extinction and early life on Earth through the fossil-inspired artwork of Ray Troll with insights from paleontologist Kirk Johnson. Watch Museum scientists prepare fossils from the field and see a giant ammonite and more.

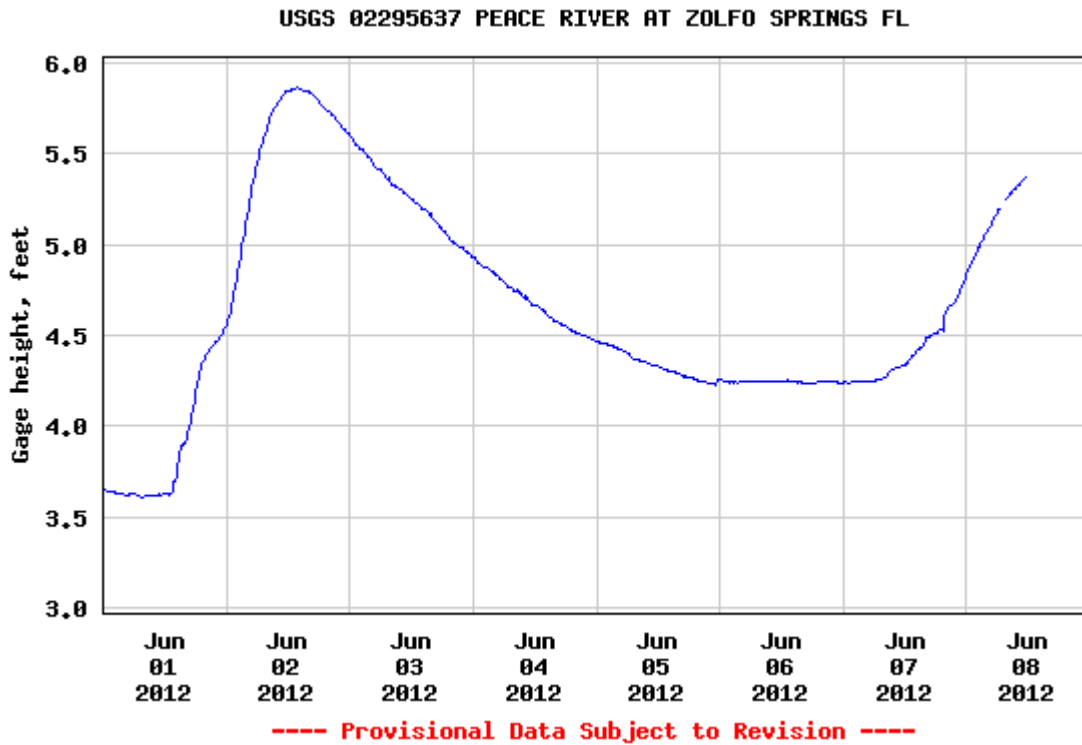
Our own Russell Brown's artwork will be part of this display as well as that from other Florida paleo-artists.

.....and you get to go through the Hall of Fossils, too!

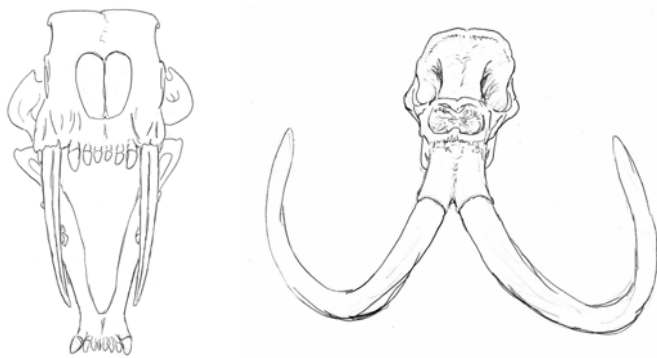
Admission is free to the Museum but there is a small charge for this traveling exhibit: \$4.50 for adults and \$4 for kids 3-17. For more info, go to [www.flmnh.edu](http://www.flmnh.edu)

**Piece on the Peace**

After months of record water level lows on the Peace, it finally got a flushing from the rains this past week. It went from 3.5 to almost 6 ft at Zolfo Springs in 24 hours. That's a good example of what will happen when the summer rains begin in earnest. Hope you've had a chance to collect. If not, you better hurry.



**2012 Fossil Fair: Shirt Designs**



POCKET

BACK

**2012 FFH T-shirts**

We'll have the order forms for this year's t-shirts at the August meeting and on our website in August. Be sure to order yours early!

**Election of New Officers**

In December we'll be electing a new President and Vice President. Now is the time for those of you interested in the position to come forward. Of course, you will have the help of former officers to "show you the ropes". Contact any Board Member or Officer to put your name into the hat.

**Janet Walker** passed away recently. She was one of the original members of the Florida Fossil Hunters and continued her support of the club even after she moved to New York.

# ANCIENT GIANT TURTLE Fossil Was Size of Smart Car

*From the Site That Gave Us Titanoboa*

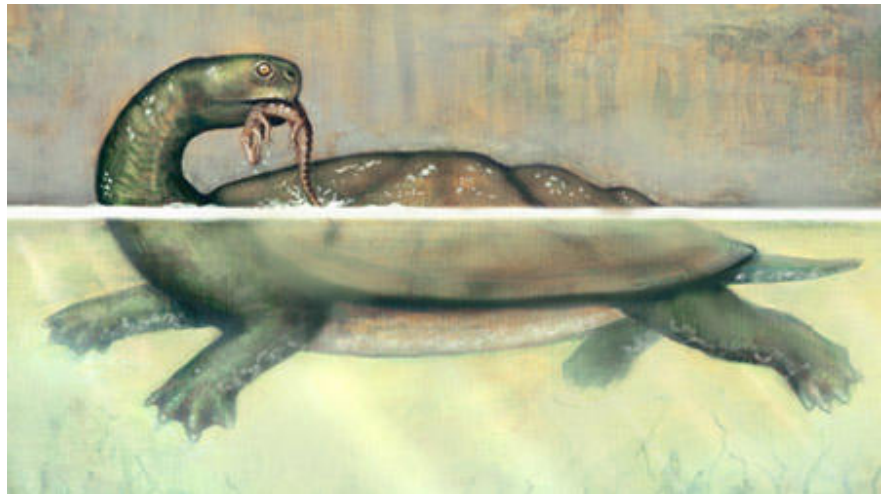
*ScienceDaily (May 17, 2012) — Picture a turtle the size of a Smart car, with a shell large enough to double as a kiddie pool. Paleontologists from North Carolina State University have found just such a specimen -- the fossilized remains of a 60-million-year-old South American giant that lived in what is now Colombia.*

The turtle in question is *Carbonemys cofrinii*, which means "coal turtle," and is part of a group of side-necked turtles known as pelomedusoides. The fossil was named *Carbonemys* because it was discovered in 2005 in a coal mine that was part of northern Colombia's Cerrejon formation. The specimen's skull measures 24 centimeters, roughly the size of a regulation NFL football. The shell which was recovered nearby -- and is believed to belong to the same species -- measures 172 centimeters, or about 5 feet 7 inches, long. That's the same height as Edwin Cadena, the NC State doctoral student who discovered the fossil.

"We had recovered smaller turtle specimens from the site. But after spending about four days working on uncovering the shell, I realized that this particular turtle was the biggest anyone had found in this area for this time period -- and it gave us the first evidence of giantism in freshwater turtles," Cadena says.

Smaller relatives of *Carbonemys* existed alongside dinosaurs. But the giant version appeared five million years after the dinosaurs vanished, during a period when giant varieties of many different reptiles -- including *Titanoboa cerrejonensis*, the largest snake ever discovered -- lived in this part of South America. Researchers believe that a combination of changes in the ecosystem, including fewer predators, a larger habitat area, plentiful food supply and climate changes, worked together to allow these giant species to survive. *Carbonemys*' habitat would have resembled a much warmer modern-day Orinoco or Amazon River delta.

In addition to the turtle's huge size, the fossil also shows that this particular turtle had massive, powerful jaws that would have enabled the omnivore to eat anything nearby -- from mollusks to smaller turtles or even crocodiles.



*Reconstruction of Carbonemys preying upon a small crocodylomorph. (Credit: Artwork by Liz Bradford)*

Thus far, only one specimen of this size has been recovered. Dr. Dan Ksepka, NC State paleontologist and research associate at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, believes that this is because a turtle of this size would need a large territory in order to obtain enough food to survive. "It's like having one big snapping turtle living in the middle of a lake," says Ksepka, co-author of the paper describing the find. "That turtle survives because it has eaten all of the major competitors for resources. We found many bite-marked shells at this site that show crocodilians preyed on side-necked turtles. None would have bothered an adult *Carbonemys*, though -- in fact smaller crocs would have been easy prey for this behemoth."

The paleontologists' findings appear in the *Journal of Systematic Palaeontology*. Dr. Carlos Jaramillo from the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama and Dr. Jonathan Bloch from the Florida Museum of Natural History contributed to the work. The research was funded by grants from the Smithsonian Institute and the National Science Foundation.

*Edwin Cadena, Dan Ksepka, Carlos Jaramillo, Jonathan Bloch. New pelomedusoid turtles from the late Palaeocene Cerrejon Formation of Colombia and their implications for phylogeny and body size evolution. Journal of Systematic Palaeontology, 2012 (in press)*



# Lulu Creek - In Hot Water

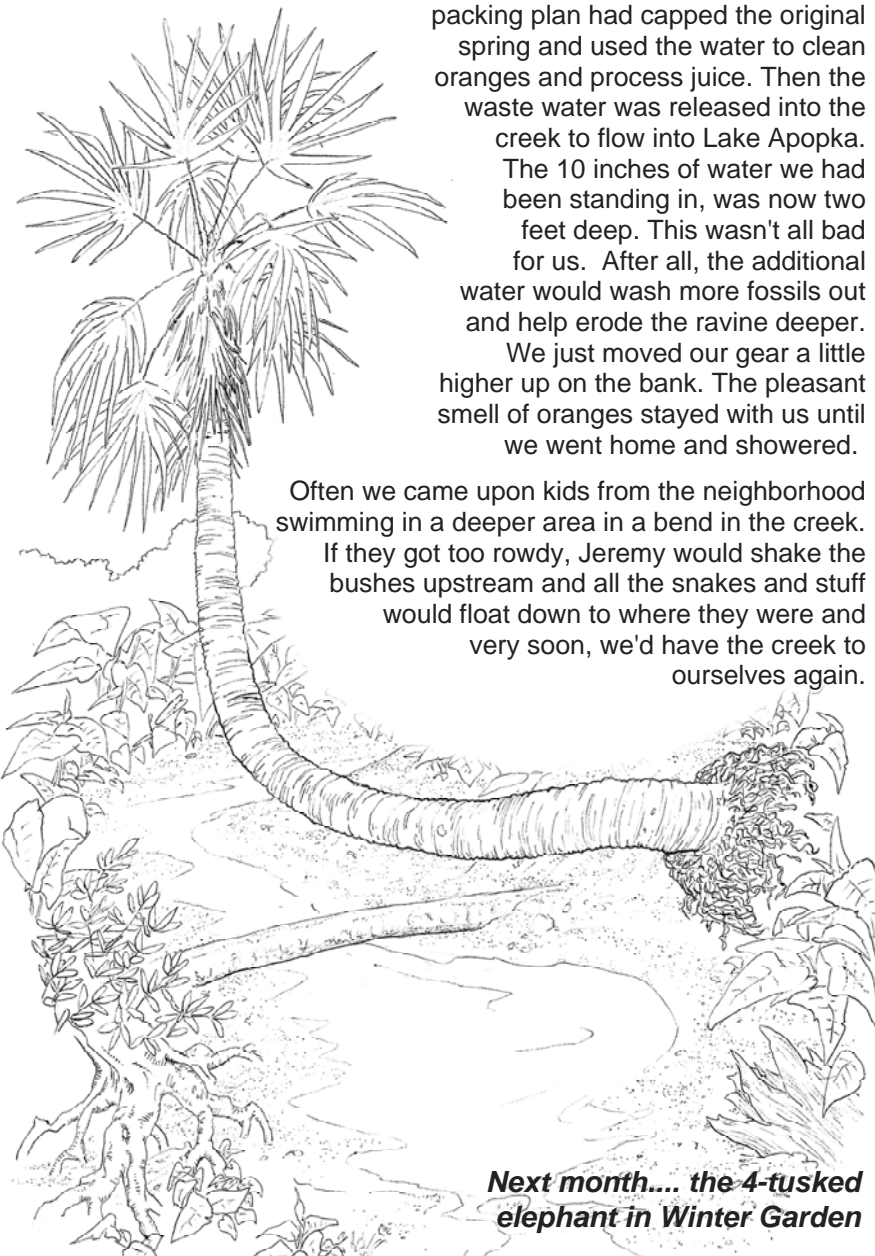
First light has always been my favorite time. Everything seems fresher, the night animals are going to bed, the daytime animals are awakening, birds are singing in the trees, and flowers are opening their blooms for the insects. Once or twice a week, you could find me at Lulu Creek soon after dawn.

One morning, the three of us... Jeremy, Mike and I were doing our thing - hunting fossils. We were in a shallow area about 8 to 10 inches deep. Strangely, the water started to rise, became almost milky, and turned warmer. We looked at each other, puzzled by this. And then a strong scent floated through the air.... oranges.

During the early 1900's an orange/citrus packing plant had capped the original spring and used the water to clean oranges and process juice. Then the waste water was released into the creek to flow into Lake Apopka. The 10 inches of water we had been standing in, was now two feet deep. This wasn't all bad for us. After all, the additional water would wash more fossils out and help erode the ravine deeper.

We just moved our gear a little higher up on the bank. The pleasant smell of oranges stayed with us until we went home and showered.

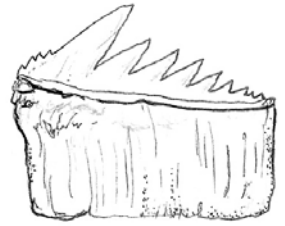
Often we came upon kids from the neighborhood swimming in a deeper area in a bend in the creek. If they got too rowdy, Jeremy would shake the bushes upstream and all the snakes and stuff would float down to where they were and very soon, we'd have the creek to ourselves again.



**Next month.... the 4-tusked elephant in Winter Garden**

One afternoon while we enjoying ourselves, the skies turned dark and a thunderstorm moved in, pouring rain.

"This wouldn't run us off", I thought as I cut a large elephant ear from the bank. We put the stems down the back of our shirts and used the leaves as natural umbrellas. Besides, the rain would wash out more fossils.



Above: Notorynchus primigenius Seven-gill shark

What started out as a trickle of water, soon became a foot deep and kept rising.... and rising. Moving our gear higher up the bank, we watched the water get higher... now about 3 feet, then four, then six. The water went dark with sediment and still it rose.

Scrambling up even higher, we watched and waited, trapped and cut off from our exit from the ravine. As it hit around 10 feet deep, a large beam from the railroad bridge floated by... along with everything else. Finally the rain stopped and just as quick as it rose, the water start to recede. I made a mental note to myself - if it rains hard, get out. Lesson learned.

Of course, as we had sat there watching the rain, we had gotten bored. We had cut down more of the elephant ears to use as a mat for our gear. Mike double-dog dared Jeremy (always eager to take a risk) to take a bite into one.... and he did. A few minutes later he was foaming at the mouth and spitting like a cobra. We all laughed till we hurt. Jeremy later told us his mouth burned like fire until that night. He'd just shrug after episodes like that and say, "What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger." Another lesson - don't be like Jeremy and do everything people dare you to do.



Above: Elephant ears, Alocasia sp. \*poisonous\*

# Fossil Buck Auction - June 2012

June 16, 2012

1. Petrified Spruce piece with crystals
2. Stromatolites, Precambrian/Cambrian, 606 mya, Morocco
- N - 3. Polished petrified wood
4. 3 fossil fish on slab, Green River
5. Agatized coral
6. Shark tooth in matrix, *Otodus obliquus*, Morocco
7. Display case made by Dave Cass
8. Fulgarite
9. Mosasaur tooth in matrix, 65 - 89 mya, Morocco
10. Quartz on wood display stand
11. Peccary tooth in jaw piece, *Platygonus compressus*
12. Ammonite, Madagascar
13. Celenite crystals, Brazil
14. Polished petrified wood
15. Two framed pictures by Russell Brown
- N - 16. Agatized coral
17. Giant armadillo scute
18. Clam with calcite crystals, Ruck's Pit, Okeechobee
19. Book: Fossils of the Burgess Shale
20. Fossil coral, Devonian, 400 mya, Morocco

N - New members

# 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 Elise Cronin-Hurley	(352) 429-1058 (407) 929-6297
Photography	John Heinsen	(407) 291-7672
Webmaster	Elise Cronin-Hurley elise@liseydreams.com	(407) 929-6297

### 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@liseydreams.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

See inside for more information on events.

June 16th 2pm Kids' Fossil Blast  
3pm Meeting and Adults  
Fossil Bucks Auction

July - no meeting or newsletter

August 18th - 2pm Kids' Fossil Blast  
3pm Meeting and speaker: Valerie First

Sept. 15th - 3pm Meeting

Sept. 29th - Mastodon & Fossils  
at Daytona Beach Museum

Oct. 13 & 14 - Fossil Fair

Oct. 17th - National Fossil Day

## 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