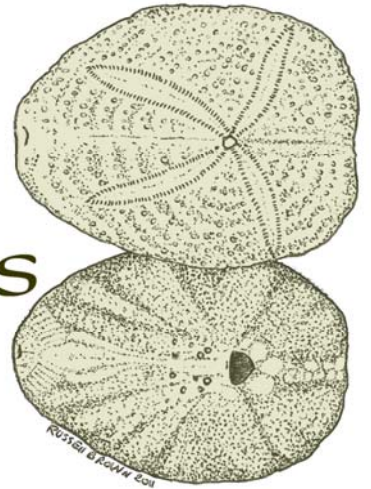


# NEWS

## Florida Fossil Hunters

Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc. dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters  
Volume 21, Number 7

August 2011



## YANKEETOWN Edition

*From the desk of the President...*

On Saturday, June 18th, the Florida Fossil Hunters held one of our two yearly auctions. With Roy Singer, Club Auctioneer at the helm, we all had a great time. A lot of satisfied bidders went home with new treasures. Start earning your "fossil bucks" for the next auction in December.

Hope everyone is enjoying their summer. I've seen a lot of goodies coming from the Peace River. So if the water is low, you should go before the storm season brings the water level up too high for screen washing. Believe me, there's nothing like going out with your family and bringing home treasures and memories to last a lifetime.

The first thing I'd like to say about the July Party at Dave Dunaway's is "Thanks, Dave, for letting us have another wonderful time at your house." I believe this year's cookout was the largest yet.... we estimate that 45 to 50 members showed up. There was plenty of great food, the rain held off for the fireworks, and the kids wore themselves out between the pool and the fort. Thanks, too, to everyone who came and helped make it another successful event.

In this issue of the newsletter, if you haven't heard yet, we'll be covering information for the our next month's event at Yankeetown, Florida. Hope you can join us.

Russell Brown  
President

**2011 Fossil Fair**  
**October 8th and 9th**

Check out page 2 and watch the website  
and September Issue for more information

## Coming Events

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**  
at the Orlando Science Center

**August 20, 2011**

Page 3 info on Yankeetown

**September 17, 2011**

2:00pm Kids' Fossil Blast

3:00pm Club Meeting

October - No Club Meeting

*For more info...*

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

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# Florida Fossil Hunters News

## Fragments

### **Piece on the Peace**

The Peace River water level has been going up and down - sometimes suddenly - with the rains. Be sure to check before you drive down there. The water level was below 6 ft. on July 19th which is low enough to stand and screen wash. From the reports on the Florida Fossil Hunters Facebook page, lots of folks have been finding some treasures this summer. Hope you can find time for the fun!

### **News from the Board**

At the July Board meeting, Sara Moray informed us that the club has more than enough to cover its usual expenses (insurance, government fees, newsletter costs, speakers, etc) and suggested that now would be the time to make a donation for education. In years past, the club has had financial difficulties but through Sara's vigilance, we have managed to accumulate sufficient funds for all our bills. The subject of such a donation has been brought up from time to time in the past by Russell Brown as well as other members.

Rather than try to spend time and money trying to find a worthy candidate for research funds, Sara suggested we contribute to the Gary Morgan award given by the FPS. The award is given each year to a graduate student for his/her research

We will get more detailed information on the selection and follow-up processes of the Gary Morgan award so we can make sure our money is spent wisely.

A motion was made and seconded at the Board meeting to put the following to the membership for a vote:

That effective January, 2012, the Florida Fossil Hunters make a donation to add to the Florida Paleontological Society's annual Gary Morgan Award. Furthermore, additional donations will be made every 2 years.

This will be put up for vote at the club's September meeting.

## Kids' Fossil Blast

A big cheer for the kids who came back with their creatures and habitats and gave us a report on them in June. It was obvious that all of you did a lot of research. You were great!

There will not be a Fossil Kids' Blast in August. We will all be in Yankeetown hunting for fossil echinoids. The next Fossil Blast will be at 2 pm on Saturday, Sept. 17th.

## 2011 FOSSIL FAIR

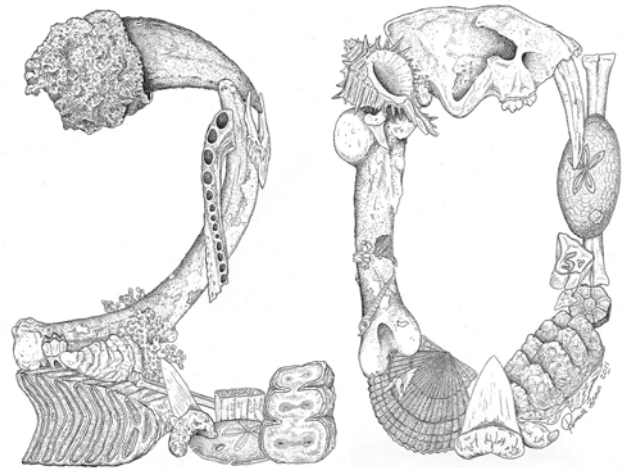
Saturday, October 8 and Sunday, October 9

You can sign up to volunteer by emailing Valerie at [vfifirst@aol.com](mailto:vfifirst@aol.com) or calling her at 407-699-9274. This is a fun way to earn those valuable fossil bucks.

Please save all your extra fossils for the Kids' Dig Pit at the Fair. It's a great way to share the excitement of fossil hunting and put smiles on children's faces.

## Florida Fossil Hunters

20 years collecting,  
preserving, educating  
1991 | Orlando, FL | 2011



### **Fossil Fair T-Shirts**

For all of you wanting this year's 20th Fossil Fair t-shirts, please place your order ASAP (form on pg 5). We will buy only the shirts we have orders for. **THERE WILL BE NO EXTRAS.**

Russell & I hope to get the color(s) picked out in the next couple weeks. Unless costs have gone up too much, we will be selling them for the usual \$10. The money will be collected when you get your shirts. Please check the website or call Bonnie at 352-429-1058 for any updates.

**SEE SHIRT ORDER FORM ON PAGE 5**

# Yankeetown Field Trip

Saturday, August 20th  
(weather permitting)

## What you need:

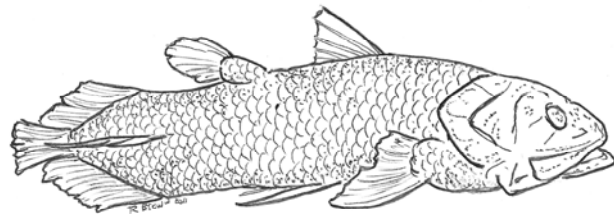
- bucket & containers for small fossils
- hand trowel or small shovel
- bug repellent
- sunscreen
- towels
- hats
- thick-soled gym shoes - no sandals
- water/drinks (no alcohol)
- snacks
- folding chairs (if you want them)

TP -there are no toilet facilities on the islands except for the bushes, but there are restrooms on shore.



## Fishing:

If you like to fish, this is a good area - salt-water, river out-takes, flats, etc. The club will not be supplying any fishing gear, so if you plan on fishing, bring your own tackle. Salt-water licenses are required. There are a couple of bait shops on Rte. 40.



## Times:

Depending on where you live, Yankeetown is a 2 to 4 hour drive. It's located north of Crystal River, where the Withlacoochee River empties into the Gulf. The boat ramp is at the end of Rte.40..... if you could drive 100 more feet, you'd be on the spoil island. There are areas to park along the road. Dave Cass, Dave Dunaway and Russell plan on ferrying members who don't have canoes or kayaks or john boats to the first island from 9:30 to 11 am. Please try to arrive early.

Russell will be grilling hot dogs at 1 pm.

Then we'll start taking folks back to the shore from 2 to 3:30 pm.

Those who have their own boats can come as early or stay as late as they like. There are several other spoil islands to visit if you do.

This is a long drive for all of us, so to be sure that the trip is still a go, check the website the day(s) before the trip or call Russell and Bonnie at 352-429-1058 or Dave Dunaway at 407-493-4253 BEFORE 8:30 pm in the evenings.

## Tides for Withlacoochee River entrance starting with August 20, 2011.

Day	High /Low	Tide Time	Height Feet	Sunrise Sunset	Moon Time	% Moon Visible
Sa 20	Low	12:38 AM	1.3	7:03 AM	Set 1:02 PM	69
20	High	5:50 AM	3.5	8:06 PM	Rise 11:53 PM	
20	Low	1:38 PM	0.8			
20	High	7:05 PM	2.7			

Tidal chart for Withlacoochee River entrance, Florida Gulf Coast - August 20, 2011 | [www.saltwatertides.com](http://www.saltwatertides.com)

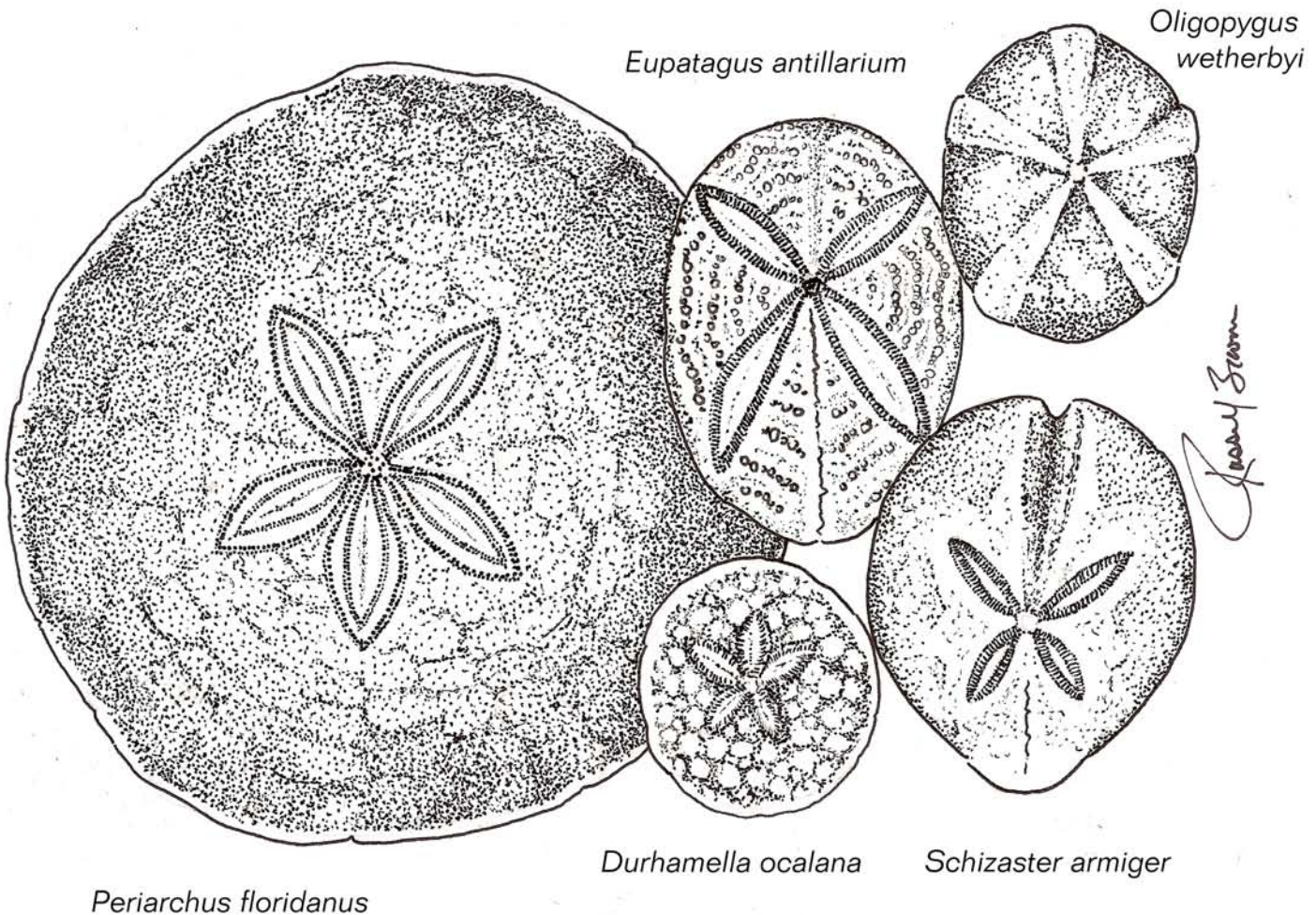
# Yankeetown Echinoids

Yankeetown is located on the west coast just north of Crystal River where the Withlacoochee River empties into the Gulf of Mexico. From Orlando, take Hwy. 50 west to 98, go north on 19, turn left onto 40 till the road ends. You won't miss it. You'll need a small boat or canoe to get to several small spoil islands. The first island is only a few hundred feet from the boat ramp.

Wear old shoes. Bring a small shovel or spade and a bucket or other containers to bring back your finds. Most echinoids can be surface collected but don't be fooled because a lot are covered with algae growth or matrix or buried in the sand. Low tide will expose all the oyster bars that line the channel, also giving more echinoid hunting area.

They range from the size of a BB to about 2-1/2 inches.

The most common echinoid found here would be the *Eupatagus antillarum*. Others found are *Schizaster armiger*, *Oligopygus wetherbyi*, *Cataopygus mississippiensis*, *Weisbozdella cubae* and *Periarchus floridanus*.



## Cleaning Fossil Echinoids

A lot of the echinoids and sand dollars we find are encrusted with some of the limestone matrix they fossilized with. Here are a few ideas on how to clean the limestone off. Just remember - be patient.

1. Soak in water.....a long time. Periodically take them out and use a toothbrush to take off layers of the limestone (calcium carbonate). This will have to be done repeatedly. Be careful not to damage the markings on your fossils. That's the only way to identify which species they are.

2. Soak in vinegar...for just a few hours. Then use a toothbrush to help the removal process. Be sure to soak the fossils in water for a couple of hours after you use the vinegar. Any acid left on it will dissolve the echinoid since they are made of calcium carbonate also. This can be repeated if you soak them overnight in plain water.

3. If you have a pool, you might have some muriatic acid around the house. It can also be bought at Home Depot. (Be careful: this stuff is actually hydrochloric acid and it will burn your skin, clothes, dissolve metal, etc.) You can use this acid to clean the echinoids. Add some of the acid to a vat of water so you have a diluted mixture. Use tongs to dip the echinoid in the acid. LEAVE IN FOR ONLY FEW MOMENTS. Immediately put the echinoid in a bucket of water to stop the acid dissolving process.

Some people have had success using a dremel drill to clean some of the matrix off echinoids as well.



## Coin Fossils - Small Echinoids & Sand dollars

These smaller echinoids are readily found by slowing down to sit and look at the small-sized gravel and shells that band the spoil islands at Yankeetown. If you don't want to sit or if short on time, you can gather up a bucket of this material and bring it home to go through later. They range from the size of a 50 cent piece down to pinhead size. Some species are flat, others are round, and there is usually a star pattern visible of the top. Echinoid spines and pieces of starfish are also found in the smaller gravel/shell mixture. I'm not too familiar with all the different species but I believe there are least a dozen different ones at Yankeetown. (Sure could use the world-renowned echinoid specialist Wiley Dykes about now). By looking at ID books or checking the Florida Museum of Natural History website, I'm sure you'll be able to identify your finds.

When we go out collecting fossils - doesn't matter if it's in a mine, on the beach, or in a river -, we usually bring home a bucket of gravel or shell material just to have something to do on a rainy day. It's a great way to extend the pleasure of fossiling.

These small and micro-fossils are often overlooked but give paleontologists a more complete picture of the environments in the past. Even the tiny gravel that gets sifted out when you look for fossils in the Peace River contains small fish teeth, nurse shark & sharp-nosed shark teeth, and a large array of micro-fossils.

Take a bucket home next time and see.  
Russell Brown

## 2011 Fossil - 20th Anniversary - T-Shirt Order Form

Russell has come up with incredible design for this year's shirts (see pg 2).

**IF YOU WANT A SHIRT, WE MUST RECEIVE YOUR ORDER FORM BY SEPTEMBER 20TH.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email or phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mark the number of shirts you want per size.**

**Kid** Small \_\_\_\_\_ Kid Med \_\_\_\_\_ **Adult** Small \_\_\_\_\_ Med \_\_\_\_\_ Lg \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_ 2X \_\_\_\_\_ 3X \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult w/Pocket-** Small \_\_\_\_\_ Med \_\_\_\_\_ Lg \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_ 2X \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of shirts ordered \_\_\_\_\_ @ Price to be announced, but will be between \$10 - \$12.

# Do You Believe in UFOs... I Do.

Many a person out in the deep woods have seen them. Sometimes people are at home when they appear. I've talked with many educated people who can't explain them but acknowledge that they exist. I didn't think about them until late one evening at Pine Hills when I became a believer.

It was after a long day of digging at the old pit. Sore and tired, I was packing up to take my gear back to the truck and looking through my finds for the day. As the light was fading, a buzzing sound rose up around me. Then I saw it. It was disc-shaped and kind of pointed at the ends. I couldn't figure out what it was. Spiraled out from its center were what looked like ridges or rib-like things running along the top and bottom.

When I talked with Dave Dunaway about it, he said that he had seen the exact object and that, in the early days of fossil hunting, they were commonly found world-wide.

As a beginner to the world of fossil hunting, if it looked strange or I didn't know what it was, I brought it home. (I still tell this to people today) Even as I was growing up and playing in the woods or wherever, I did that. I brought home all kinds of unusual things that my Dad usually could identify and, except for the things that my mother made me let go, I have many of them today.

In my early days at the Pine Hills pit, I came across a biscuit/seed-like rock thing. Later that weekend, I found another larger and even stranger-shaped bone/stone. A lot of friends were always checking out what I had been digging up, but nobody could identify these strange things. It wasn't until a FFH meeting when a Doctor who specialized in whales was able to identify both objects. They were inner ears bones: one from a sperm whale and the other from a pygmy sperm whale.

The disc-shaped object might be an ossicle (fish ear bone - land animals have ear bones that evolved from ancient fish jaw bones. The modern fish evolved a different hearing mechanism.). It was one of the items from Pine Hills that Jeremy and I brought to the Florida Museum of Natural History. Some of our UFOs were readily identified but others remain a mystery. And that sort of mystery is what drives the science of Paleontology. By sharing information with other interested people, the story of our world is written and re-written as we discover more.

Some collectors keep their fossils mostly locked away and rarely bring them out, while others like to share the knowledge with other people. I urge you to report any UFO that you find. It could be nothing or it could be a new discovery.

Russell Brown

\* UFO - unidentified fossil object

## Sperm Whale Ear Bone

Pine Hills, Hubbard Pit

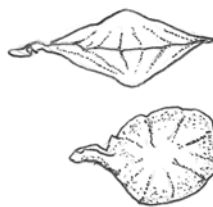


FRONT



BACK

Russell Brown  
9/6



### UFO 1

Pine Hills,  
Hubbard Pit  
fish hyperostotic  
bone  
species



### UFO 2

Gainesville  
Hogtown Creek  
Undetermined.  
\*Also seen at  
Peace River

# Florida Fossil Hunters

# Membership Application

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) 493-4253
Secretary	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
Treasurer	Sara Morey	(407) 353-8675

**Chairs:**

Education	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
Field Trips	<b>OPEN</b>	
Fossil Fair	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Fossil Auctions	Dave Dunaway	(407) 493-4253
Fossil Bucks	Dave Dunaway	(407) 493-4253
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@lisedreams.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	

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

## Newsletter Policy

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

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).

# Florida Fossil Hunters Mark Your Calendar

See page 2-3 for more information on events.

**August 20, 2011**

Yankeetown Fossil Hunting/Picnic  
(Weather permitting—see page 2 for more info)

**Saturday, September 17, 2011**

2:00 pm Kids' Fossil Blast  
3:00 pm Club Meeting

**October 2011**

No Meeting

## 2011 FOSSIL FAIR

October 8th and 9th

## 2011 FOSSIL FAIR FLYERS

Available on the website.

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

*Download, print and pass them out to  
your friends and favorite Businesses*

### 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