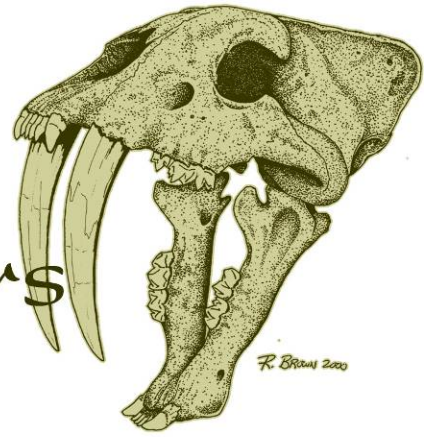


NEWS

Florida Fossil Hunters



Florida Prehistorical Museum, Inc. dba/ Florida Fossil Hunters
Volume 23, Number 10

November 2013

From the President.....

November is here and the cooler weather is welcome. Plus lower levels at the Peace River means it's time to go.

September and October were busy months club-wise, and finished off with the Fossil Fair. Every year I get kinda freaked-out worrying about this event. And every year, you the club members come in and save the day, making the whole thing easier. I cannot thank you enough. It seemed a little slow at first, but by the end a lot of dealers were happy..... some very happy.

A lot of people came to the Fair from seeing the Florida Fossil Hunters at the different events before our show. This, I believe, is the pay-off from moving OSC Fossil fest to the weekend before the Fair plus everyone handing out flyers.

On **November 16th**, from 10 am to 3:30 pm, we'll have a **big shark display and three talks at the OSC** provided by yours truly (Russell Brown) and a Kids' program about sharks. See inside this issue for the schedule. Our business meeting part will be held around 3:30 to 4 pm in one of the smaller rooms. Please come early to the 4th Floor Dino Digs to check out the "jaw-some" displays.

Of course, we can use some volunteers to help tell all the visitors about fossils and sharks. Email bonnierussell62@gmail.com to sign up.

On Saturday, **December 14th**, there will be "**Christmas at the Fort**", Dave Dunaway style. There will be raffles, our year-end Fossil Bucks Auction, yummys brought in by all of you to share..... in case you haven't noticed, there is a lot of eating in our club.

Ask anyone who has attended past Holiday parties, especially the kids, and they'll tell you it's like an amusement park at Dave's. Come join the fun, go home with some treasures, and a memory you won't soon forget.

Russell Brown
President

2014

Watch the December and January newsletters and the websites for what's going on in the new year

Details
Inside

Coming Events

UPCOMING MEETINGS at the Orlando Science Center

November 16th

2 pm - Kids' Fossil Blast
3 pm - meeting

December 14th

Christmas at the Fort
3 pm to 7 pm

More events listed on back page

For more info...

www.floridafossilhunter.com

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Florida Fossil Hunters News

Fragments

Fossil Fair - Thank you

Thanks to all of you that contributed to the success of our 2013 Fossil Fair.

Big buckets of gratitude to:

Valerie First for doing the planning, signing up vendors, arranging for advertising, etc.

Sara Moray for keeping us on track and making the kitchen a "home away from home" for all the vendors & volunteers.

Dave Cass for storing & hauling the Kids' Pit and Ed Metrin for running it the whole weekend.

Dave Dunaway for all his time, the loan of his ladders and tools, and his expertise identifying fossils for the kids.

Terry Titus & Brian Sanders for doing the night security.

Marge Fantozzi for emptying her closets and almost single-handedly supplying the Silent Auction.

All of the vendors for bringing in such wonderful (& irresistible) treasures. A special thanks to those that donated to the Silent Auction and Kids' Pit.

Every volunteer from those who put in dawn to dusk work for three days to those you managed to squeeze out some precious hours from their overloaded schedules.

Thank you to all of you. We couldn't do it without each and every one.



Kids' Fossil Blast

The kids had a great time creating their own crinoids at the August meeting. It was like the Cambrian Explosion all over again with a variety of forms and colors.

Of course, there will be activities for the kids at our Fossil Fair on October 5th and 6th.

The next meeting for the Kids' Fossil Blast will be on Saturday, November 16th, at 2 pm. Russell is bringing in some of his shark collection and will talk about sharks and fossil shark teeth. Bring in your shark tooth collections, too.

Kids' Fossil Blast is hands-on fun while learning about the past and the earth with real fossils, replicas, and pictures. It's geared for kids ages 5 to 13.

Piece on the Peace

Dust off your screens and shovels. The Peace River is low enough for all of us diggers and sifters to go hunting for treasures again. Who knows what the rains of the past few months have moved.... and where.

Ahhhhhhh..... the thrill of the hunt.

Mark your calendars!

The December party-meeting-fossil bucks auction will be on Saturday, December 14th at Dave Dunaways' house. More information will be in the December newsletter.

Fossil Shows

The Fossil Club of Lee County will hold its Fossil Show on Sat., Dec. 7th, from 9 am to 5 pm, at the Araba Shriner's Hall, 2010 Hanson St., Ft. Myers, FL 33901. There will be exhibits, talks, silent auctions, and a children's dig. Admission is \$3. Children under 12 can get in free.

The Tomoka Gem & Mineral Society will hold its annual Jewelry, Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show on Sat., Jan. 18th from 10 am to 6 pm and on Sun., Jan. 19th, from 10 am to 5 pm. It will be held at the Volusia County Fairgrounds, Tommy Lawrence Bldg., State Rte. 44, Deland, FL (1/4 mi. east of I-4, Exit 118). For more info go to www.tomokagms.org

November 16th meeting - Sharks

We're sharing the display and presentations of Sharks with all the guests of the Science Center in the Dino Digs Hall on Saturday, November 16th. Then at 2 pm, we'll have a Fossil Kids' Blast for members and guests at the Science Center. At 3 pm we'll move into a smaller room for our business meeting.

Please come out early and volunteer at the displays more fossil bucks for December's auction! You can email Bonnie at bonnierussell62@gmail.com to sign up.

Neanderthal Ball

Orlando Science Center had a great set-up for the Neanderthal Ball. This was the 7th one of this fun/ adult style events held once a year to raise funds for OSC. We had a fossil display ran by Dave Dunaway, Ed Metrin, Valerie First, Bonnie and myself. There was food, drinks, entertainment, and plenty of auction items..... trips, services, merchandise, etc. ...donated by lots of sponsors. Looking over downtown watching the sunset, we all had a good time meeting and talking with folks dedicated to the idea of promoting the knowledge of science.

Next year we may donate some different items than we normally do. This year the Florida Fossil Hunters donated a Smilodon skull replica and a fossil clam shell with calcite crystals from the Fort Drum Mine.

If you think you'd like to attend next year's Ball, email Russell or Bonnie at bonnierussell62@gmail.com

Florida Paleontological Society

10th North American Paleontological Convention February 15 - 18, 2014 | Gainesville, FL

We are pleased to announce that the 10th North American Paleontological Convention (NAPC) will be held in Gainesville, in February 2014. The meeting will be hosted by the Florida Museum of Natural History (University of Florida) from February 15th through 18th (Saturday - Tuesday).

Pre-conference and post-conference field trips are tentatively planned for February 13th -14th and 19 - 20th, respectively. For more info go to:

<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/napc/symposia.htm>

Russell is looking for a few good women.

I've been talking to Bonnie about the idea of having a "Women in Paleontology" meeting sometime next year. I would like to try and make it a yearly event.

I'm hoping to get a few of our ladies to help Bonnie on this idea. From professionals to students, please email or talk to Bonnie & I. We keep a full plate with all the activities, but lately, it's been the whole table.

I believe this would make for a great meeting and/or an all-day event at OSC. Russell Brown, President

Megalodon is coming back! For those of you who can't get enough of sharks and fossil teeth, we have good news. The Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville will be bringing back their fantastic exhibit "Megalodon - Largest Shark that Ever Lived" on Sept. 27, 2014. It will run until Jan. 4th, 2015.

2013 Florida Fossil Hunters Tee Shirts REPRINT

The 2013 T-shirts were such a success, that we're getting together an extra printing.

If you missed getting one or would like to order additional shirts, please let us know by the Nov. 16th meeting.

Attached is a copy of the printer's proof. In addition to the blue regular shirts and orange pocket shirts, you can order light blue pocket shirts. Be sure to mark the color on your order.

2013 Fossil Fair - T-Shirt Order Form

**IF YOU WANT A SHIRT, WE MUST RECEIVE YOUR ORDER FORM
BY NOVEMBER 16TH.**

Name: _____

Email or phone#: _____

Mark the number of shirts you want per size.

Blue Shirts w/ no Pocket-

Kid Small _____ Kid Med _____

Adult Small _____ Med _____ Lg _____ XL _____ 2X _____

Orange Shirts w/Pocket-

Adult Small _____ Med _____ Lg _____ XL _____ 2X _____

Blue Shirts/no pockets: # _____ @ \$11 ea.

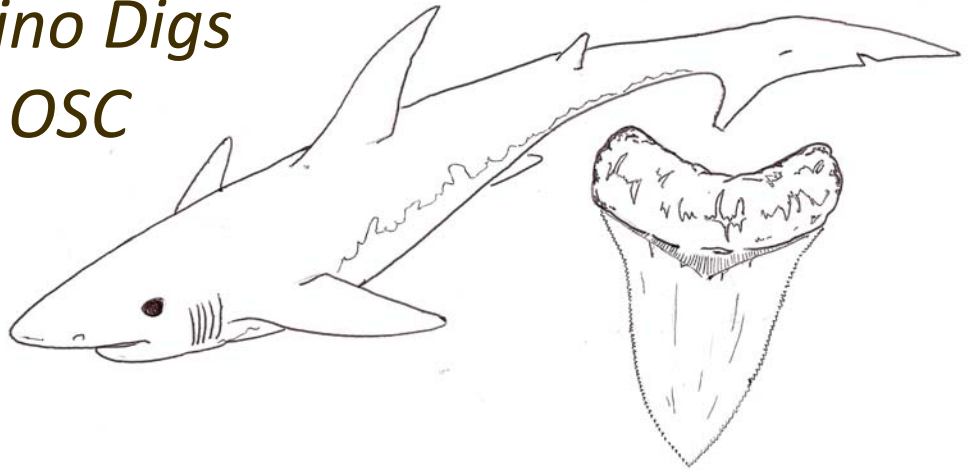
Orange Shirts with pockets: # _____ @ \$13.

Total number of shirts ordered _____



Sharks

*Saturday, November 16th
in Dino Digs
@ OSC*



The Florida Fossil Hunters will be doing a special display and program at the Science Center. Approximately 8 tables of shark jaws, fossil teeth, and more will be set up for most of the day.

3 live presentations by Russell Brown:

11:30 am - Jurassic Sharks

1 pm - Modern Sharks

2 pm - Kids Program

3 pm - Fossil Sharks

The presentations will last approximately 20 minutes each.



Visit our website for more information

www.floridafossilhunters.com

Orlando Science Center, 777 E Princeton St, Orlando, FL 32803

Tell Tale Toes

Point to Oldest-Known Fossil Bird Tracks from Australia

Oct. 28, 2013 — Two fossilized footprints found at Dinosaur Cove in Victoria, Australia, were likely made by birds during the Early Cretaceous, making them the oldest known bird tracks in Australia.

The journal *Palaeontology* is publishing an analysis of the footprints led by Anthony Martin, a paleontologist at Emory University in Atlanta who specializes in trace fossils, which include tracks, burrows and nests. The study was co-authored by Patricia Vickers-Rich and Michael Hall of Monash University in Victoria and Thomas Rich of the Museum Victoria in Melbourne.

Much of the rocky coastal strata of Dinosaur Cove in southern Victoria were formed in river valleys in a polar climate during the Early Cretaceous. A great rift valley formed as the ancient supercontinent Gondwana broke up and Australia separated from Antarctica.

"These tracks are evidence that we had sizeable, flying birds living alongside other kinds of dinosaurs on these polar, river floodplains, about 105 million years ago," Martin says.

The thin-toed tracks in fluvial sandstone were likely made by two individual birds that were about the size of a great egret or a small heron, Martin says. Rear-pointing toes helped distinguish the tracks as avian, as opposed to a third nearby fossil track that was discovered at the same time, made by a non-avian theropod.

A long drag mark on one of the two bird tracks particularly interested Martin.

"I immediately knew what it was -- a flight landing track -- because I've seen many similar tracks made by egrets and herons on the sandy beaches of Georgia," Martin says.

Martin often leads student field trips to Georgia's coast and barrier islands, where he studies modern-day tracks and other life traces, to help him better identify fossil traces.

The ancient landing track from Australia "has a beautiful skid mark from the back toe dragging in the sand, likely caused as the bird was flapping its wings and coming in for a soft landing," Martin says. Fossils of landing tracks are rare, he adds, and could add to our understanding of the evolution of flight.

Today's birds are actually modern-day dinosaurs, and share many characteristics with non-avian dinosaurs that



picture caption: The Cretaceous bird tracks were found on a slab of sandstone. (Credit: Photo by Alan Tait)

went extinct, such as nesting and burrowing. (Martin previously discovered the trace fossils of non-avian dinosaur burrows, including at a site along the coast of Victoria.)

The theropod carnivore *Tyrannosaurus rex* had a vestigial rear toe, evidence that *T. rex* shared a common ancestor with birds. "In some dinosaur lineages, that rear toe got longer instead of shorter and made a great adaptation for perching up in trees," Martin says. "Tracks and other trace fossils offer clues to how non-avian dinosaurs and birds evolved and started occupying different ecological niches."

Dinosaur Cove has yielded a rich trove of non-avian dinosaur bones from dozens of species, but only one skeletal piece of a bird -- a fossilized wishbone -- has been found in the Cretaceous rocks of Victoria.

Martin spotted the first known dinosaur trackway of Victoria in 2010 and a few other tracks have been discovered since then. Volunteers working in Dinosaur Cove found these latest tracks on a slab of rock, and Martin later analyzed them.

The tracks were made on the moist sand of a river bank, perhaps following a polar winter, after spring and summer flood waters had subsided, Martin says. "The biggest question for me," he adds, "is whether the birds that made these tracks lived at the site during the polar winter, or migrated there during the spring and summer."

One of the best records of the dinosaur-bird connection has come from discoveries in Liaoning province of North-eastern China, including fossils of non-avian dinosaurs with feathers. Samples of amber have also been found in Liaoning, containing preserved feathers from both birds and non-avian dinosaurs going back to the Cretaceous.

"In contrast, the picture of early bird evolution in the Southern Hemisphere is mostly incomplete," Martin says, "but with these tracks, it just got a little better."

Gainesville #5: That Lucky @#! Jeremy

We were up in one of Gainesville's many creeks, looking for sharks' teeth. In the one bend there was a huge gravel bar. It was early in the morning but we had already hiked for a while picking through gravel bars as we went. Jeremy doesn't like to stay still too long.... always itchy to wander off. Sometimes I think he has worms from an early adventure. Me... I like to set up in an area and rake around for sharks' teeth. We'd found teeth there before..... Mako, Hemipristis, Contortus, and Megalodons. Although the megs were all under 3 inches in length.

By the afternoon, I'd moved more gravel than you could haul off in a pick-up truck. Back-breaking, but I had a few teeth to show for my efforts. The biggest was a 2-1/2" Mako. It was my prize of the day... creamy yellow with a perfect gum. I was very happy. Then Jeremy showed up.

We showed each other our finds of the day.... a handful of teeth each, a usual day's haul.

Just before we packed up to leave, there was time for one more look. Jeremy slid his shovel up under a stump in the bank and pulled out a blue 5-1/4 inch Megalodon.

What I said next will be censored for this article. Let's just say it started with, "You lucky @#!" He grinned, like a new Daddy. I figured that next time he wouldn't be so lucky.

The following weekend we went back to Gainesville. It was a different creek and a new morning, and I was feeling lucky. I was eaten up by shark-tooth fever and ready to give Jeremy some payback.

We climbed down to the creek near to where a street crossed over it, following the path other fossil hunters before us had made. We could still see footprints

down at the creek bed. Walking upstream through the culvert, I had barely got my shoes wet, when Jeremy suddenly stopped.

"Hey, man. Look it's a skull," he said as he pointed down at our feet.

At first just a little narrow line of bone showed here and there. All around it you could see where people had walked right over it... us included, only months before.

Jeremy got down on hands and knees and started to clean off the area so we could see exactly what had been found. Wishing I had a camera, I watched him fan away slowly at the sand as a skull gradually emerged. It was lying up-side down, and it was broken up.

"Dolphin", Jeremy said, grinning at me while I looked up at the heavens to say "why".

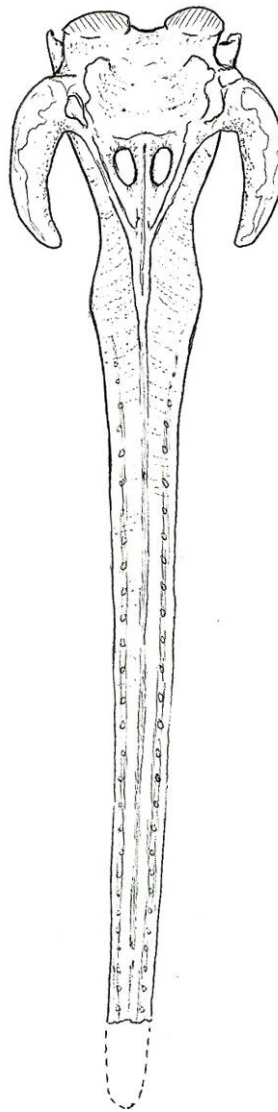
We ended up spending our day removing his trophy piece by piece, trying to get every scrap of bone. No teeth were found with it. Finding teeth in the jaws is very rare. This is because the teeth usually fall out after the flesh of the gums decay.

After getting it home and putting it all together, Jeremy had found a 33 inch long upper skull of the Dolphin species, *Pomato-delphis inaequalis*, from the Miocene. Unbelievable but true. I was there and the skull is sitting right in front of me as I write this.

This is only one of the many extraordinary things that he's found through the years..... mastodon palates, tusks, a gator skeleton, manatee skeleton... That lucky @#! has found it. But my day is coming. Wait until the next trip. I'll show him.

Russell Brown

Next time.....The Next Trip Out.



Jeremy's dolphin skull,
33 inches

Est. 3 to 4 inches
missing at the end
of the snout.

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	OPEN	
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@liseydreams.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: bonnierussell62@gmail.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.

November 16th
2 pm - Kids' Fossil Blast
3 pm - meeting

December 14th
Christmas at the Fort

**Keep watching for more info
about 2014**

Be Green

Email Bonnie at bonnierussell62@gmail.com
to receive the newsletter via email.



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[Florida Fossil Hunters](#)

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Visit us online at www.floridafossilhunters.com

Articles and comments should be sent to: bonnierussell62@gmail.com

Florida Fossil Hunters

Post Office Box 540404

Orlando, Florida 32854-0404



Florida Fossil Hunters News