

Fossil Club of Lee County

April 2009

Message from the President



We welcome all of our new members and are pleased that you joined our great club. I am sure you will enjoy the good fellowship and fun we have at our monthly meetings and going out on fossil hunting trips. I want to thank all of you for participating in our annual auction and a special thanks to our hard working auction staff. We raised enough money to fund at least two university scholarships and make a donation to our host, the Calusa Nature Center. We also want to thank Sharon Drake and her family for preparing special refreshments for the auction event.

In accordance with our by-laws we hold elections in April and those elected take office in May. This year all officers and directors chose to remain in office for another year with one exception. Our Secretary, Leslie Steiffel expressed her desire to resign due to her heavy workload at this time. At our February meeting, we asked if anyone would volunteer for the position and we are pleased to announce that Sharon Drake will become Secretary on May 1st. She has extensive secretarial experience and we are confident she will be an asset to our club. We want to thank Leslie for a job well done and for always being an active member of our club.

(continued on page 2)

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on April 16, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Blvd.

Officers

Bill Shaver, President (239)834-0694 /
billshaverpeaceriver@hotmail.com

Al Govin, Vice President (239)245-7650 and cell 910-2339

Ray Seguin, Treasurer, 939-1921 or 936-5019

Sharon Drake, Secretary, (239) 823-9052

Board Members

Director—Louis Stieffel, 458-9818

Michael Orchin, 574-6318

Sandy Schwartz, 772-8015

Trip Director, Bill Shaver

Dive Trip Director, Mike Siciliano , 980-1406

Committees

Newsletter: Cheryl Mitchell

Speakers: Bill Shaver

\$1.00 Raffle: Mike Siciliano

Auction: Louis Stieffel

Web Master: Curtis Klug

(President's report continued)

While speaking of active club members, we had a great staff of volunteers for the Fossil Show last December and we as a club need to discuss the subject of having another show for December 2009. We will talk about this at our April meeting. We have two speakers from the University of Florida for our April meeting. One will talk about fossil shark teeth collecting in Panama and her research hypothesis regarding a paleo-nursery for megalodon sharks in Panama. The other speaker will talk about fauna from the desert of Sonora, Mexico and their affinities to tropical forests. Each will talk for about 25 minutes. They have very impressive resumes and I am sure we will enjoy their presentations.

The 17th Annual Venice Shark Tooth Festival will be held on April 17, 18, and 19. Many of the vendors there were generous in donating items for our Auction. A list of these vendors is included in this newsletter. Let's show them our appreciation by stopping by their booths when you are at the show. Also, we want to thank Marc Cantos for meeting with these vendors and securing their donations.

Several of our members have been out hunting for fossils so its time for our monthly Show and Tell. Bring in your finds and share with your fellow members---also if you have a mystery fossil, bring it in and see if you can stump our experts. Our staff is ready for the next meeting and will have books, T-shirts, and riker boxes for sale and we will have a raffle.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting.

Bill

Club Events

The club had its second trip this year. Over twenty members bravely waded into the Peace River in a giant down pour. It was raining so hard we could hardly see our baskets, well, maybe not that hard, but it was dreary. If you remember our first trip this year which was on February 2, the Peace River was cold and we just about froze. We promise to have a better trip next time. In spite of the bad weather, we managed to find several specimens that are common to the river.

Our pit director, Gunther, has been taking members into the Quality every Sunday and they are still finding vertebrate fossils and Gunther found a great crab fossil.

We are planning other trips so look for the signup sheets at our next meeting. Remember, you need to be a 2009 member to go on the trips. If you have not paid yet, see our treasurer at the next meeting. Good hunting to all.

Diving at the Peace River

Pictures submitted by Charles O'Connor

Rhino Teeth



Minutes

MINUTES OF MEETING OF FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

A meeting of the membership of the Fossil Club of Lee County was held at the time, date and place set forth below:

DATE OF MEETING: March 19, 2009

MEETING TIME: 7:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Calusa Nature Center

Number in attendance: 65

Presided by: Bill Shaver, President

Bill held a brief business meeting, discussing upcoming field trips.

Our annual auction was held with great success. Louis Stieffel was the auctioneer, with assistance from Michael Orchin.

Club members keeping the books were Ray Seguin, Sandy Schwartz, Pam Plummer, and Donna Johnson.

Sharon Drake and family brought delicious refreshments.

April refreshments: Louis & Leslie Stieffel

By: Leslie Stieffel, Secretary

New Members, April 2009

Ken and Cathy Metcalf

Jim and Jana Russel

Don and Gerri Huston

Jeff D' Huyvetter

Chuck Zietna

Thalia St. Lewis

Colleen, Rick and Don Stephens

William, Alex, Alese, and Lori Manos



Just A Reminder

Dues for membership are due on January 1, 2009. Anyone who joined this past September, 2008 is covered for the 2009 year. If you would like to mail in your dues, go to the website: www.FCOLC.com and print out a membership application. Be sure to print your email address on the application.



Refreshments

REFRESHMENTS FOR CLUB MEETINGS

Leslie and Louis are doing refreshments for April with Don and Pat LeGree bringing a dessert. Need a volunteer for May---it doesn't need to be nearly as elaborate as our last two which were for special occasions. See Bill or Al to sign up---**help support your club!**



ABOUT OUR SPEAKER(S)

Elvis Nunez

Elvis Nunez was born in 1985 in the heart of Central America, Belize. He represents a blend of both the Yucatec and Ketchi Mayan lineages. Even after losing his father at the age of 6, Mr. Nunez was encouraged by his single mother to pursue an education. Supported by a partial government scholarship, Mr. Nunez attended St. John's Junior College in Belize City at the age of 15. There he majored in Biology, Chemistry, and Mathematics. Upon graduating on the Dean's List in 2004, he was hired to teach 11th and 12th grade chemistry in Belize; a job he eagerly accepted. In 2005, Mr. Nunez was awarded a full-scholarship by the Organization of the American States, and by the University of Hawaii at Hilo to pursue his Bachelor's Degree in Science. While in Hawaii, Mr. Nunez majored in Marine Science and Biology. He was also an active tutor, National Exchange coordinator, and dancer at the University of Hawaii. He graduated on the Dean's List with Highest Honors in 2007. He is currently enrolled at the University of Florida where he is pursuing a Master's degree in Biology with a minor in Science Education.

Every summer, Mr. Nunez returns to Belize to teach Mathematics, Science, and now Paleontology. During his science career, Mr. Nunez's portfolio has grown to include working at the University of Michigan to fight adrenal cancer; working in a genetics lab with hermaphrodite nematodes; working to protect Marine Reserves both in Belize and in Hawaii, and excavating pre-historic mammals in Florida. He is currently working with all 50 high schools in Belize researching science teacher content knowledge and curriculum reform in Biology.



Catalina Pimiento



I'm a Biologist, I have worked with sharks since 2002, first in Mexico and for the last 4 years in Panama, first in the Marine Laboratory at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute where I studied the migration patterns of whale sharks in Las Perlas Archipelago and then at the Center for Archeology and Paleoecology (CTPA) from the same institution as a laboratory assistant. I am currently a graduate student in Biology at the University of Florida with a minor in Science Education. I work as a researcher-curator of Florida Museum of Natural History. My research has two main components. In one, I study the paleoecology of fossil sharks in Panama and in the other component I develop internet teaching tools for children educating in marine palaeobiology.

For more info: http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/vertpaleo/catalina_cv.htm

Talk overview

Title: **Giant shark babies from Panama**

Although sharks are apex predators in the oceans, juveniles are susceptible to being preyed upon by larger individuals during the first years. Females give birth to pups in shallow environments called "nursery areas" to protect their offspring while juvenile sharks use these environments as a refuge from predators. These nursery areas are essential habitats for the success of sharks.

In this talk, I will speak about my research hypothesis of Panama as a paleo-nursery area during the Late Miocene for the juveniles of the biggest predator that have ever lived: The Megalodon (*Carcharocles megalodon*). I will talk about the fossil sharks' teeth collection in Panama, the facts that drive me thinking about this hypothesis, the methods I'm using to test it, and the preliminary results and conclusions.

Coming Events



VENICE SHARK TOOTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL

The Festival will held on the 17th 4pm-9pm, 18th 10am-9pm, and 19th 10am-5pm.

If you plan to attend, stop and see our very own Gunther Lobish, our esteemed Pit Director, who will be sharing a booth with Briar Creek Trading. Also, several dealers donated items for our annual auction and we should stop by and thank them for their support. The dealers are Marble gems, H&T, International Fossil Co., Superior Fossils, Extinct Treasures, Bone Valley Shark Teeth, Exotica Minerals, Steve's Fossil Shark Teeth, Mega teeth Fossils, Frank Garcia, Fossils On-line, and Educational Bio-facts.

Directions: Take I-75 to Exit 193 (Jacaranda Blvd), Make a right off the exit. Take a right on to Venice Ave. Go straight ahead crossing over the Venice Ave Bridge and thru the Venice retail business center, Make left onto Harbor Drive, and continue until you reach the Festival parking area.



Mike Sciliano—Contact Mike for Diving Excursions through the FCOLC



Cartoon by Palmer 2008

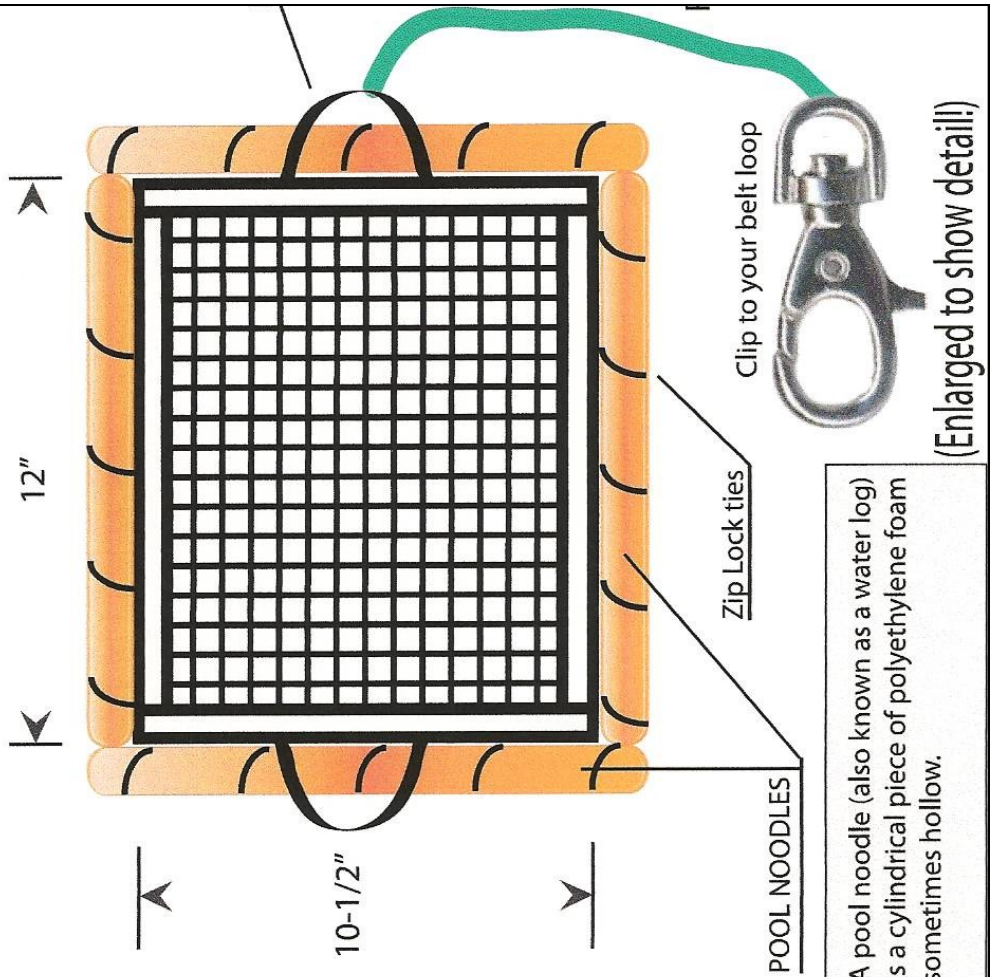
PLEASE SEND IN YOUR PHOTOS RELATED TO FCOLC to.....

kayakpeaceriver@yahoo.com



Fossil Screen for the River

TOP VIEW



Suggested Fossil Hunting Equipment Checklist:

Sifter - if you make your own, add noodles to the sides so it floats and a leash of some kind keeps it from floating away

Shovel, trowel, or scoop (plastic beach shovel, ice scoop etc.) Zip tie a pool noodle or other foam tube to your shovel handle so it's easier to find when you lay it down to check your sifter.

Shelling Scoop or Sand Flea Rake (mesh baskets with attached long handles) - This can be found where fishing supplies are sold. Local hardware store by Tractor Supply carries two different sizes.

Fossil I.D. sheet - (put in a gallon zip bag or purchase a laminated one at the Outpost)

Nail Apron (Home Depot) or fanny pack for around your waist to hold treasures as you dig

Bucket - (5 gallon are handy to sit on, for the big finds, and to throw broken glass in)

Zip bags - to sort your goodies and to carry them in. Need zip bags for your phone and other personal items. Plastic storage containers and paper towels are handy to store the really special and fragile finds.

Metal Rod - around 4-5 feet long to probe the bottom. Shovels and paddles work too.

Mask and snorkel - if you want to fan the bottom.

Trash bags - bring all your trash back and help clean the river as you go. / **Cooler with drinks and snacks**

Sunscreen, Sunglasses (polarized preferred)

Hat - wider the brim the better, **Old shoes w/ socks, water shoes, or dive booties** - Socks help keep the sand and gravel out of your shoes.

Old clothes

Towels and dry clothes to leave in the car so you can clean up and dry off once you get back

Rare Fossil Octopuses Found

livescience.com – Wed Mar 18, 12:21 pm ET
It's hard enough to find fossils of hard things like dinosaur bones. Now scientists have found evidence of 95 million-year-old octopuses, among the rarest and unlikeliest of fossils, complete with ink and suckers. The [body of an octopus](#) is composed almost entirely of muscle and skin. When an octopus dies, it quickly decays and liquefies into a slimy blob. After just a few days there will be nothing left at all. And that assumes that the fresh carcass is not consumed almost immediately by [scavengers](#). The result is that preservation of an octopus as [a fossil](#) is about as unlikely as finding a fossil sneeze, and none of the 200 to 300 species of octopus known today had ever been found in fossilized form, said Dirk Fuchs of the Freie University Berlin, lead author of the report. Fuchs and his colleagues now have identified three new species of octopuses ([Styloctopus annae](#), [Keuppia hyperbolaris](#) and [Keuppia levante](#)) based on five specimens discovered in Cretaceous Period rocks in Lebanon. The specimens, described in the January 2009 issue of the journal *Palaeontology*, preserve the octopuses' eight arms with traces of muscles and rows of suckers. Even traces of the ink and internal gills are present in some specimens. "The luck was that the corpse landed untouched on the sea floor," Fuchs told LiveScience. "The sea floor was free of oxygen and therefore free of scavengers. Both the anoxia [absence of oxygen] and a rapid sedimentation rate prevented decay." Prior to this discovery only a single fossil species was known, and from fewer specimens than octopuses have legs, Fuchs said. What most surprised Fuchs and his colleagues Giacomo Bracchi and Robert Weis was how similar the specimens are to modern octopus. "These things are 95 million years old, yet one of the fossils is almost indistinguishable from living species," Fuchs said. This provides important evolutionary information, revealing much earlier origins of modern octopuses and their characteristic eight-legged body-plan, Fuchs said.

WEB SITES OF INTEREST

www.fcclc.com FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/> MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY @ GAINSVILLE

<http://flmnh.ufl.edu/natsci/vertpaleo/vppermit.htm> FLORIDA VERTEBRATE FOSSIL PERMIT

<http://www.southwestfloridafossilclub.com> SOUTHWEST FLORIDA FOSSIL CLUB

<http://www.floridafossilhunters.com> ORLANDO FOSSIL CLUB

<http://www.tampabayfossilclub.com> TAMPA BAY FOSSIL CLUB

<http://www.pasttimeartifacts.com> (Specialized Points or Tools)

Contact Cheryl Mitchell at kayakpeace@yaho.com if you have any suggested additions to our web site in the interest column

(Rare Fossil Octopuses Found continued)

Unlike vertebrate animals, octopuses lack a well-developed skeleton, which allows them to squeeze into spaces that a more robust animal could not. "The more primitive relatives of octopuses had fleshy fins along their bodies. The new fossils are so well preserved that they show, like living octopus, that they didn't have these structures," Fuchs said. This insight pushes back the origins of the modern octopus by tens of millions of years, he said.



Please join us for this month's meeting, it will prove itself to be fun and interesting. Meeting time: 7:00 pm, April 17, 2009, at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Boulevard.