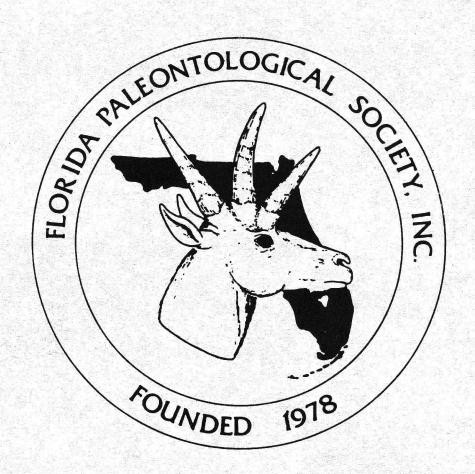
Florida Paleontological Society, Inc. Newsletter



Volume 14 Number 3 Summer Quarter 1997

FLORIDA PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

OFFICERS

Gordon Hubbell, 150 Buttonwood Drive President:

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joyce Bode, Ft. Meade, 1998 Bruce MacFadden, Gainesville, 1998

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Barbara Fite, Lutz, 1997 Dean Sligh, Orlando, 1998

Jim Toomey, Bradenton, 1997 Steve Hutchins, Old Town, 1998

Barbara Toomey, Sanibel, 1998

COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS

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Bruce MacFadden Resident Agent:

Historical:

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Anita Brown Lelia and William Brayfield David Webb Gary Morgan Clifford Jeremiah

INFORMATION, MEMBERSHIP, AND PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Please Address: Secretary, Florida Paleontological Society, Inc.

Florida Museum of Natural History University of Florida

Gainesville, FL 32611

News Notes...

Fall Meeting Highlights...

This year's Fall FPS meeting was held on Saturday, November 1 at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville, Florida. Attendees assembled at noon at the new Powell Hall building of the Museum, on the University of Florida Campus. It is a spacious, state of the art facility which will house the paleontology displays, most of which are still under construction.



Powell Hall at the University of Florida

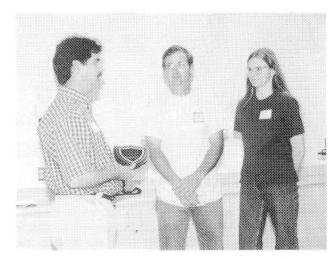
Members registered for the meeting, toured the new building, and held impromptu fossil identification sessions. The FPS is quite fortunate in having so many knowledgeable amateurs to help out less-informed members identify their finds. Gary Morgan traveled to Gainesville from New Mexico just for the meeting, and his expertise helped with the more difficult identifications.

President Gordon Hubbell convened the Fall Business Meeting about 1:30 PM. During the meeting, the new Florida Museum of Natural History directors were introduced: **Doug Jones** is the Museum Director, **Bruce MacFadden** is the Associate Director, in charge of education and exhibits, and **Roger Portell** is the Coordinator of Museum Operations. Having so many paleontologists in charge of the museum should certainly assure the continued influence of this science at the museum, and in the state as well. Current plans call for the old Dickenson Hall exhibits to close in December and the Powell Hall exhibits to open in January of 1998.

During the meeting, Bruce MacFadden gave a report on the "Bricks and Bones" program, and Roger Portell announced that the Hulbert book on Florida's fossil vertebrates is nearing completion, requiring only final revision before going to press. It was also announced that a *Paleofest98*, to be held at the new museum facility, is under consideration for

the 1998 Fall meeting. Announcements will be forthcoming as plans develop.

The 1997 Howard Converse award was presented by Roger Portell to **Andrew and Greta Murray**, FPS members from Bradenton, Florida.



Roger Portell presenting the 1997 Converse Award plaque to Andy and Greta Murray.

The Converse Award is presented annually to amateur paleontologists who have made significant contributions to Florida paleontology. Andrew and Greta have extensive worldwide and Florida fossil collections, and have donated specimens generously to the museum over the years. Most recently they donated holotype specimens of the echinoids *Rhyncholampus chipolanus* and *Pterynotus rogersi*. The Murrays' names will also be added to the permanent plaque listing the Converse Award recipients, which hangs in the museum.

Following the business meeting, the Board of Directors convened for short meeting prior to the bat talk. At 3:30, Ken Glover presented an interesting slide presentation of bats at Dickinson Hall. After the talk, members caravaned to the Lubee Bat Center in northern Alachua County. Here we were treated to a fascinating tour of the facility, which currently specializes in flying foxes.



The Lubee Bat Center



Flying foxes dining on fruit and vegetables at the Lubee Bat Center.

After returning to Gainesville, members convened back at Powell Hall for refreshments and a catered banquet dinner. Museum personel showed us the exhibits under construction and allowed us to tour an Incan artifact exhibit not yet open to the public.



Humans dining on a Saturday evening buffet, served at Powell Hall by a local caterer

Following dinner, Gary Morgan presented an informative talk on Fossil bats. The following synopsis is excerpted from his presentation. Saturday's activities ended with a fossil auction, featuring donations from the members. Attendees were able to silent bid on smaller items. Phil Whisler, with the assistance of Janet Burton and Joyce Jackson Poulton, served as auctioneer for the larger items. This falls's auction took in over \$700, which will go into the FPS atudent research award fund.



Gary Morgan presenting a talk on Fossil Bats

The fall meeting weekend ended with a Sunday fossil collecting trip to the Haile quarry, west of Gainesville. Roger Portell obtained special permission for our group to enter the quarry, which is normally not open to amateurs.

We owe many thanks to this year's meeting organizers: Roger Portell, Barbara Toomey, and Tom Ahern. Thanks to their efforts we had a enjoyable, informative, and successful meeting.



Phil Whisler and assistants conducting the fossil auction

Fossil Bats, a synopsis (from Gary Morgan's talk)

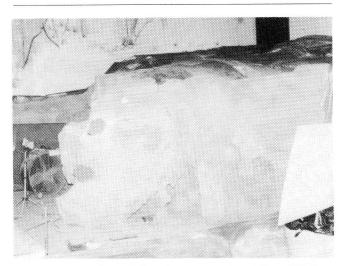
Bats are flying mammals. The arm bones of bats have become modified in size, shape, and position to form efficient webbed wings for flight. Unlike other mammals, the humerous is completely outside the body cavity. They have five digits, with the first developed into a claw. The primitive bats and flying foxes also have a claw as the second digit as well. The foot is very reduced, with five poorlydeveloped toe bones. They have a very strong sternum for the attachment of flight muscles. Some of the vertebrae are fused, and the older bats had Modern bats comprise about 1000 long tails. species worlwide. The two major groups are the microchiroptera and megachiroptera. megachiroptera, or flying foxes, have large eyes and better eyesight than the microchiroptera, with a long snout and well-developed sense of smell. They do not echolocate their food, and occur only in the tropics of the old-world, feeding on fruit or pollen. There are about 100 species of flying foxes.

The microchiroptera comprise the other 850 Most are small and delicate, generally weighing less than 20 or 30 grams. They have shorter snouts, are nocturnal, and they use echolocation to find their insect prey. They are found worldwide, and comprise all of Florida's species. Most North and South American species can be differentiated based on tooth morphology. Most are insectivores, but some (the vampires) eat other bats, birds, frogs and drink animal blood. Others are pollen and nectar feeders, with reduced teeth, and which are the nightime verson of hummingbirds. Modern New World bat groups include the sack-wing bats, the fishing bats, the ghost-faced bats, and the leaf-nosed bats, which comprise fruit and nectar feeders, as well as carnivores and vampires.

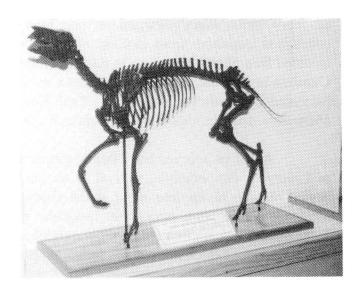
Bats, as as group, appeared at the base of the Eocene, about 60 million years ago. Fossil bats are known from sites around the world. Some of the more productive localities include the Green River Shale of Wyoming, from which came the oldest known bat fossil (*Icaronycteris index*), and the Messel area of Germany. In general, bat fossils are rare. They are mostly a tropical group, very small and very delicate, and the bones aren't well-preserved. The missing link between legged mammals and bats is not yet known.

Florida's fossil bats are represented largely from cave, fissure, and solution pipe deposits. The

latter two types of sites are commonly exposed in excavations and quarries. Most of Florida's fossil species are Pliocene and younger in age. Finding bat bones generally requires screening sediment collected at these sites. Gray bat fossils from Surprise Cave indicate that Florida's Pleistocene climate was, at times, cooler than today in order to provide the adequate hibernation temperature for this species. One of the most productive Florida localities is the Thomas Farm paleosinkhole/cave site in Gilchrist County. Some 3000 individuals have been found at this site, more than all known from the rest of the world.



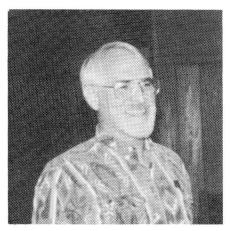
New karst terrain exhibit under construction at Powell Hall



The recently-completed skeleton of the small horse Archaeohippus blackbergi, displayed for the first time at Powell Hall

Florida Shows Up At Society Of Vertebrate Paleontology International Meeting In Chicago

by S. David Webb Florida Museum of Natural History



Dr. S. David Webb

Florida's paleontological community was well represented at the Fifty-seventh annual meeting of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago from October 7th through 11th. FPS President **Dr. Gordon Hubbell** was present throughout, and at one point I saw him in the symposium entitled "The Rayfinned-Fish half of the Vertebrata" (That is a shocking perspective for those of us who think all the action is terrestrial). **Dr. Douglas Dew** and his collaborators presented a richly illustrated poster on "The Use of Computed Tomography and routine Radiography for the study of worked bone, ivory and antler from late Pleistocene Florida Fauna: Technique and Findings." Doug, his wife, Erika, and their son, Doug Jr. enjoyed the meetings and the Field Museum.

The Florida Museum of Natural History was represented by **Dr. Bruce MacFadden** who presented a poster on "Horses in Cyberspace", myself, and five graduate students. **Jean-Louis Monfraix** gave a paper on "Paleoecology of the terrestrial fauna from the Leisey Bone Bed", and **Dennis Ruez, Bricky Way, Jay O'Sullivan** and **Matt Mihlbachler** attended the meetings and exhibits. Five other participants who presented posters or papers are recent graduates from the Florida group, namely **David Lambert** on proboscideans, **Richard Hulbert** on horses and other fauna, **Bob Chandler** on fossil birds, **Gary Morgan** on late Miocene fauna from New Mexico and **Bruce Shockey** on notohippid ungulates from Bolivia. A still earlier wave of former Florida alumni who were there included **Bob Martin** working in Kansas, **Matt Joeckel** in Nebraska, **Greg McDonald** in Idaho, **Steve Cumbaa** in Canada, and **John Hoganson** in North Dakota. An additional Florida paper of interest was presented by **Kathryn Hoppe** and **Paul Koch**; it was "Strontium isotope ratios of late Pleistocene Mammoths and Mastodons from Florida: Evidence of Migration".

All of us enjoyed the Field Museum and many other attractions of the downtown "loop" area of Chicago. For example, several of us got there early enough on Tuesday (the night before it all began) to take in the free night at the Chicago Art Institute where Egyptology, Classic Greek, and Medieval Armor were among our favorites. Everyone remembers his or her own highlights from the Field Museum. I appreciated the new exhibits on the history of life, the presence of "Archie" the only *Archaeopteryx* skeleton ever to come to North America, discussions about the museum's recent purchase of Sue, the most complete *T. rex* skeleton, for \$8.4 million, and a magnificent banquet in the equally magnificent Stanley Field Hall where a group of us Floridians secured a table almost under the *Brachiosaurus* skeleton.

Florida Paleontological Society Statement of Assets 31 October, 1997

Assets

| Cash | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| Checking | | \$ 9,331.23 |
| Savings | | \$22,918.70 |
| | Total Cash and Credit | \$32,249.93 |
| Inventory | | |
| Beach and Bank Collecting (480 @ \$1.14) and (3480 @ \$1.43) | | \$5,471.84 |
| Fossil Shells (730 @ \$4.36) | | \$3,182.80 |
| Handbook of Paleo. Prep. (1152 @ \$3.98) | | \$4,584.96 |
| Leisey (29 @ \$10.00) | | \$ 290.00 |
| Plaster Jacket (2825 @ \$.50) | | \$1,412.50 |
| Butvar (75 LBS. @ \$4.91/LB) | | \$ 368.25 |
| | Total Inventory | \$17,260.85 |
| | Total Assets | \$49,510.78 |

Florida Paleontological Society, Inc. Revenue and Expense Report 1 November 1996 - 31 October 1997

REVENUE

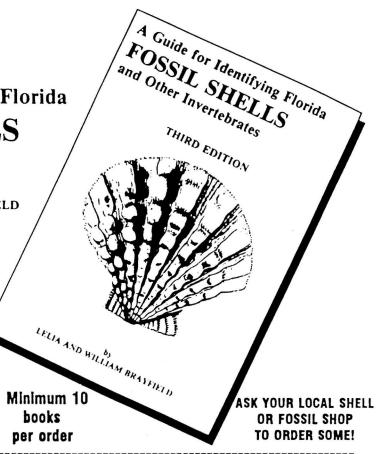
| Membership Dues | | \$4,424.00 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sales | | |
| Publications Beach and Bank Collecting Fossil Shells Handbook of Paleo Prep. Plaster Jacket Papers in Florida Paleo. Leisey Volume | | \$ 4,087.75 809.22 458.00 34.00 128.00 100.00 |
| Butvar | | 450.00 |
| Miscellaneous Meetings Auction Other | | \$1,023.00 610.00 55.00 |
| | Total Revenue | \$12,178.97 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Publications | | |
| Beach and Bank Collecting Handbook of Paleo. Prep. Brayfield Book Plaster Jacket Papers in Florida Paleo. (800 copies) Newsletter Hulbert Book | | \$4,924.64 0.0 0.0 0.0 \$ 729.00 \$1,288.00 0.0 |
| Postage | | \$ 967.94 |
| Miscellaneous Meetings Scholarship Donation to U. of F. Foundation Office Supplies StateFiling Fee Other | | \$2,020.38 500.00 1,000.00 37.49 61.25 4.00 |
| | Total Expenses | \$11,532.70 |

Wew A Guide for Identifying Florida
FOSSIL SHELLS
and Other Invertebrates

Updated by the staff of the Invertebrate Paleontology Division, Florida Museum of Natural History.

Notice!

Due to a fire at the publisher, all originals and plates of this book were destroyed. There will be no more printings, and the supply is limited to current stock.



FLORIDA PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC. FLORIDA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32611

| PURCHASE | ORDER NO | | DATE | | |
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| QUANTITY | (Min. 10 Books) | DESCRIPTION | UNIT PRICE | TOTAL | |
| A | | Florida FOSSIL SHELLS_ | \$5.97 | | |
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MINIMUM 10 BOOKS PER ORDER



Prep Talk

by Russ McCarty

Greetings from the bone lab. Well, it was all over in eight short, intense minutes. billed as the finest, most complete Tyrannosaurus rex ever found, had been sold by Sotheby's auction house in New York City. The Chicago Field Museum of Natural History had won the intense bidding with a final offer of 7.6 million dollars (actually 8.4 million dollars when the buyers premium was paid to the auction house), beating out the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences and the Dallas Museum of Natural History, and an unnamed private collector, when the bidding passed the 7 million dollar mark. Not only did "Sue" claim the record for the highest sum ever paid for a fossil, she also acquired the reputation as the most controversial fossil since the Piltdown Hoax. Since August 1990, when "Sue" was found by Sue Hendrickson, the notorious fossil has been the subject of searing argument and debate resulting in lengthy court cases, even imprisonment. continuing controversy surrounding the discovery and ownership of "Sue" has raised important questions about the rights and responsibilities of private individuals, Federal Law, Native American Tribal Law, and the concerns of scientists. Although most amateur collectors and professionals have squared off and taken opposite sides regarding the status of "Sue", some scientists, as well, are divided on the issues.

Is "Sue" worth 8.4 million dollars? The inflated prices that many fossils are now bringing on the open market generally benefit only the person who collected the fossil. Both scientists and the average fossil collector who buy specimens to upgrade a personal collection are hurt by these trends. Certainly few collectors could have purchased "Sue" at a price of over 8 million dollars, nor could the Field Museum of Natural History had it not been for the financial support of Super Corporations like MacDonalds and Disney. Of

course most of us are not trying to buy anything comparable to "Sue", but the price increases go down the line making even small, well known fossils rather pricey.

Time will tell. I have learned from experience that field assessments of the condition, or completeness of a fossil are invariably overoptimistic. Its sort of like buying a used car or a house, or acquiring a spouse. There is a force operating in the universe that blinds a person to the true condition of a thing which is new or exciting. It is only after the object is paid for and brought home that the scratches, patches of rust, and other imperfections become visible. As head of a prep lab, I have learned to take with a proverbial "grain of salt" the claims made by field collectors who bring fossils to me for preparation. revealed during preparation is often very different from that perceived in the field—the perfect skull the collector reported jacketing is in truth only 30% complete and in such a two dimensional state that it looks like a refugee from Flatland, or even worse, the skull proves to be not a skull at all, but a badly crushed pelvis and sacrum. "Sue" consists of many large jackets which have yet to be opened. I think perhaps that only the skull and a few peripheral post cranial elements have been partially prepared at this point...yes, time will tell.

New Plaster Jacket Material

Back in the Spring of this year, a friend and I discussed making a mold of a recently deceased manatee. Now that's a pretty ambitious project for two lazy, middle-aged fellows, so we were brainstorming on how to easily make the mold and rigid overmold on something so big and odd shaped. Well, my friend showed up one day with a small section of overmold he had made out of something he had fished out of the dumpster. He had dipped it in plaster of Paris slurry and it hardened into a nice rigid form. Eureka!! Mon Dieu!! Gott Im Himmel!! I took one look at what he held and realized that my friend had discovered the perfect plaster jacketing material.

What was this mystery trash he had retrieved from the dumpster? (Send \$5 and I will reveal all—Just Kidding!!) As it turned out, the mystery material was a piece of something called "plastic filter media" which is used by air conditioning and

heating specialists. This piece was blue on one side, white on the other, and about one inch thick. It's texture was sort of like plastic "cotton candy", with strong fibers and lots of space between them to soak up plaster.

Acquiring a few square feet of the material, I made a number of plaster jackets to test the potential of this material. It worked like a champ! Let me extol the virtues of this discovery. To make a jacket over a small dog-sized skull you need only one piece of material. A piece 12" long and 8" wide will do nicely. Once the skull is exposed and ready to jacket, place as usual, some matrix or paper over the skull to protect it. Now mix up a thick plaster of Paris slurry in a bucket and immerse the piece of filter material in the plaster. Squeeze it like a sponge until it absorbs all the plaster it can hold. Now lay this piece over the paper (or matrix) covered skull. With your hands, smooth and shape the plaster filled material into the configuration you For extra strength smooth the wish it to be. remaining plaster over the surface of the jacket.

When this jacket has cured you will have made a one piece jacket that will be stronger than a 1 inch thick jacket made of plaster bandage. I was actually able to stand on the top of this jacket without it cracking, bending, or breaking in the slightest. This stuff is truly unbelievable. It will have taken a tenth of the time and about a twentieth of the cost. The filter media is available at heating and air conditioning supply businesses. I was given a price quote of 36 dollars for a roll of filter media, 1" thick by 36" wide and 90 feet long. A similar material was pointed out to me by a lady at the museum who makes quilts. She said the filter media I was using was almost identical to the 1" thick plastic quilt batting sold at Walmart and other retail stores.

Let's compare filter media to plaster bandage:

- Cost is pennies per jacket compared to dollars per jacket.
- 2) Strength is greater than plaster bandage, but it can be cut or sawed as easily.
- 3) Weight is much less than plaster bandage. You do have to carry plaster of Paris and water with you, but it takes surprisingly little plaster to fill up the piece of filter media.

- 4) Longevity is greater. Plaster bandages go bad and absorb moisture over time.
- 5) Filter media is easier and quicker to use than plaster bandage. It can be precut into different commonly used sizes and easily carried in your field pack.

Give it try. It definitely has a place in field collecting operations.

Fossil Stuff on the WEB

Please check out *Paleontological Resources for Fossil Collectors*, a page I have been putting up this past year. In it you will find lists of fossil clubs, lists of books on paleontology and preparation, and fossil ID, lists of suppliers of equipment, tools, adhesives, conservation materials, and other things. Also tips on preparation, field collecting and fossil identification. The page is growing. If you'd like to contribute an article on a special topic to the Paleo Resources page or think of something that should be there, but is not, please let me know. The address for the Paleo Resources page is:

http://flmnh.ufl.edu/natsci/vertpaleo/resources/res.htm While you're at it take a look at the rest of the Florida Museum of Natural History pages and the Vertebrate Fossils page found under Departments and Collections at: http://flmnh.ufl.edu

There are also two new sites on the WEB that deal with fossil preparation and conservation. The first is the Equipment and Tools Free Classifieds Page. This page will list used equipment and other tools and supplies used in preparation. There will be space for viewers to place <u>Wanted</u> or <u>For Sale</u> ads. Sounds like the perfect place to get rid of equipment you no longer want, or a place to acquire needed equipment at bargain prices. The site is located at:

http://www.globalexpos.com/classifieds.html
The second site is dedicated to all sorts of new
preparation supplies from airscribes and air abrasive
machines to adhesives and other conservation
materials. The address is:

http://www.globalexpos.com/Prep supplies.html

Questions, comments, and suggestions should be directed to Russ McCarty at the VP Prep Lab, Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611. Telephone: (352) 392-1721.

Email: Cormac@flmnh.ufl.edu



Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections

SPECIAL OFFER FOR FPS MEMBERS

The recently-published wallchart

"Adhesives and Consolidants in Geological and Paleontological Conservation^{*}

is now available to FPS members for \$2.50 (which includes postage)

This chart is part of the SPNHC Leaflet Series, Vol. 1, No. 2. It is normally available only to SPNHC members, but may be ordered as long as supplies last from the following address:

> Julia Golden, Treasurer SPNHC 121 Trowbridge Hall University of Iowa Iowa City, IA 52242-1379

Make checks payable to "Society for the preservation of Natural History Collections".

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FLORIDA PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Mail completed form to: Florida Paleontological Society

Florida Museum of Natural History

University of Florida Gainesville, FL 32611

| New Renew | al Member Nu | mber (From label)_ | |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Name | | | |
| A J.J., | | | |
| | | State | |
| Zip Code | Telephone | | |
| E-mail Address | | | |
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| 1. INDIVIDUAL ACTIVE (\$15.00)_ | | 4. GIFT (Mark Typ | |
| 3. INSTITUTIONAL (\$15.00) | | 6. COUPLES (\$20. | |
| 5. FAMILY (3 or more. \$25.00) | - | 8. ASSOCIATE (U | |
| 7. SUSTAINING (\$50.00) | | \$5.00) | |
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| | BIOGRAPHICAL FACT SI | НЕЕТ | |
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| 3. PRIMARY AREAS OF INTEREST | h . | | |
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| OLIGOCENE | | | |
| EOCENE | - | - | |
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| 6. DO YOU BUY TRADE | FIND FOSSILS? | | |
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FLORIDA PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

As stated in the Articles of Incorporation, "The purposes of this Corporation shall be to advance the science of Paleontology, especially in Florida, to disseminate knowledge of this subject and to facilitate cooperation of all persons concerned with the history, stratigraphy, evolution, ecology, anatomy, and taxonomy of Florida's past fauna and flora. The Corporation shall also be concerned with the collection and preservation of Florida fossils." (Article III, Section 1).

CODE OF ETHICS

ARTICLE IX

| Section 1. | Members of the Florida Paleontological Society, Inc., are expected to respect all private and public properties. |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Section 2. | No member shall collect without appropriate permission on private or public properties. |
| Section 3. | Members should make a sincere effort to keep themselves informed of laws, regulations, and rules on collecting on private or public properties. |
| Section 4. | Members shall not use firearms, blasting equipment, or dredging apparatuses without appropriate licenses and permits. |
| Section 5. | Members shall dispose of litter properly. |
| Section 6. | Members shall report to proper state offices any seemingly important paleontological and archaeological sites. |
| Section 7. | Members shall respect and cooperate with field trip leaders or designated authorities in all collecting areas. |
| Section 8. | Members shall appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources. |
| Section 9. | Members shall conduct themselves in a manner that best represents the Florida Paleontological Society, Inc. |

ANNUAL DUES for the FPS are \$5.00 for Associate Membership (persons under age 18) and \$15.00 for Full Membership (persons over age 18) and Institutional Subscriptions. Couples may join for \$20.00, and Family memberships (3 or more persons) are available for \$25.00. A Sustaining membership is also available for \$50. Persons interested in FPS membership need only send their names, addresses, and appropriate dues to the Secretary, Florida Paleontological Society, Inc., at the address inside the front cover. Please make checks payable to the FPS. Members receive a membership card, the FPS newsletter, the Papers in Florida Paleontology, and other random publications entitled to members.

NEWSLETTER POLICY: All worthy news items, art work, and photographs related to paleontology and various clubs in Florida are welcome. The editors reserve the right not to publish submissions and to edit those which are published. Please address submissions to the Editors, Florida Paleontological Society, Inc. Newsletter, at the address inside the front cover.