

FLORIDA PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 25 NO. 1

SPRING 2008

Florida Paleontological Society, Inc. Fall Meeting – November 9-11, 2007 Bradenton, Florida

Our fall field trip was a huge success! The weather was warm and wonderful and the fossils were abundant. We met for refreshments at the South Florida Museum Friday evening and the food and company were excellent. Good friends and Snooty the Manatee were in attendance. Catching up on past fossil excursions and the anticipation of the next day's finds were the main topics of discussion of course! A gracious museum curator (Suzanne White) gave us an interesting and informative tour of the museum. The upper level renovation is now complete and the

for us. We each had our favorite fossil in mind. My ambitions included a big meg tooth and whale fossils. After a few hours we begrudgingly hiked back up the hill with buckets laden with our fossil treasures. Roger, George Hecht, and Jonathan Bloch identified our fossils for us. I saw a lady with a huge, possibly six inch, meg tooth that she found. Whale vertebrae, teeth, and a skull cap were found as well as murex shells and the ever popular tube worm colonies (marine snails of the genus *Vermicularia*). Many people found a variety of shark teeth including megs, tiger, mako, and requiem specimens. The best vertebrate find of the day was a walrus tusk found in two pieces that fit back together perfectly.

We retired for the afternoon to rest and clean up. We met for dinner at a nearby restaurant where we dined, talked, enjoyed good lectures and purchased auction items. Our first speaker of the



Attendees of the FPS field trip to the SMR Aggregates Quarry, Bradenton. Hundreds of Pliocene sea shells, shark teeth, and marine mammal bones were carted away by this enthusiastic group.

displays are fabulous. I have been to the museum a couple of times and look forward to my next visit, especially to view the paleontology and archeology exhibits. We give a big thanks to the Toomey family for hosting the evening as well as providing the refreshments at the quarry.

After a restless night dreaming of the fossils we may find, we met for breakfast, got organized, and caravanned to the nearby quarry. Our fearless leader, Roger Portell, provided us with orange safety vests and gave us the low-down on fossiling at the site. Roger told us to look for shells, whale material, *C. megalodon* shark teeth and the ever elusive and highly sought after walrus tusks that can be found at this site. We scrambled down the hill to the lower level in the mine to find our treasures. Luckily it was not muddy everywhere and the recent rains washed the fossils clean

evening was FLMNH researcher Jonathan Bloch who spoke on "the world's largest snake". During his search for vertebrate fossils in Colombia the team discovered carapaces of a new species of giant turtle and a giant snake vertebra. Remember the movie Anaconda? A snake that large did exist!!! Our second speaker was FLMNH graduate student Jason Bourque and his topic was "fossil turtles from Haile 7G". We learned about this Haile site where they have been collecting numerous, new turtles.

Following the presentations, Roger auctioned off a variety of items to benefit the Gary S. Morgan Student Research Award. Of course we had the famous previously worn t-shirts from George Hecht that we couldn't wait to bid on. I guess his wife made him clean out his closet? There were a variety of books, display boxes, and other items including skull casts. Melissa Cole

FLORIDA PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS AND BOARD

President: Melissa Cole, 904 Red Bird Lane, Altamonte

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President-Elect: Marge Fantozzi, 101 Olympus Drive, Ocoee, FL

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COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS

Book Committee: R. Hulbert Nominations: M. Cole

Finance: G. Hecht, R. Portell

Membership: G. Hecht

Honorary Members

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and Awards: B. Toomey Historical: G. Hecht

Board of Editors: R. Portell, J. Herrera, R. Hulbert

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INFORMATION, MEMBERSHIP, AND PUBLICATIONS

Address: Secretary, Florida Paleontological Society, Inc.

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Jason Bourque (Museum Studies graduate student and 2006 G.S. Morgan Student Research Awardee) discusses new turtle finds at Haile 7G, the latest museum dig site.

went home with the "scary human skull" much to her delight. Enjoy! The auction was fun and we always look forward to it. This year we raised 845 dollars.

Thanks to everyone who worked to make the weekend a success! We all had a lot of fun and can't wait to go back again. Shelley Zimmerman



FPS Secretary Marcia Wright holds her beautiful new treasure, a complete Murexiella faceta.

Florida Paleontological Society Inc. (FPS) Minutes of Board Meeting, Bradenton, Florida November 10, 2007 – 3:05 pm

The meeting was called to order by president, Melissa Cole. Board members present were: Melissa Cole, Marge Fantozzi, Roger Portell, George Hecht, Barbara Toomey, Jim Toomey, Greg Herbert, and Marcia Wright.

Melissa Cole gave each attendee an updated agenda. There was immediate discussion about concerns over the fact that two members of the day's field trip did not follow the directions that they had been given. They strayed into an area of the mine that was off limits to us.

LAST WARNING: ANYONE NOT FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS OF THE FIELD TRIP LEADER WILL BE BANNED FROM FUTURE TRIPS!!

Discussions and decisions about publications offered by the society and others:

Sales of <u>Handbook of Paleo-Preparation Techniques</u> by H. Converse are dropping, and the society will just let the copies run out without reprinting.

Robin Brown, author of <u>Florida's Fossils</u>, <u>Guide</u> to <u>Location</u>, <u>Identification and Enjoyment</u> would like to donate his book and its future earnings to the society.

Bernie and Carol Peterson are preparing a shell book which was edited by Roger Portell. It should be ready sometime in 2008.

Gary Schmelz and Roger Portell are also working on a fossil shell "picture book" for future publication.

After considerable debate, dates for the spring meeting are May 3-4, 2008. The meeting will be arranged in Andalusia, AL so as to incorporate a field trip to the Point-A-Dam nearby. The field trip would be on Saturday and the board meeting would be a "breakfast meeting" on Sunday morning. Marge Fantozzi and Marcia Wright will make the arrangements for that weekend. The site was chosen because it will allow children of all ages to join in.

Joan Herrera, who produces the society newsletter, requests that all newsletter articles be edited before sending them to her. Melissa will contact members for newsletter input. Photographs and any financial articles are to be sent to George Hecht. He will edit them and send them on to Joan. All other newsletter articles and minutes will be sent to Marge Fantozzi, who will then send them to Roger Portell. Roger will edit and send everything to Joan. The newsletter deadlines for articles are January 1st and July 1st of each year.

It was moved by Roger Portell and seconded by Jim Toomey that Robin Brown be an honorary member of FPS. The motion was passed unanimously.

Jim Toomey moved and George Hecht seconded that in January, 2009 the FPS dues all be raised by \$5.00/yr. – excluding life members. The new dues would be: individual \$20.00; couple \$25.00; associate (under 18 yrs. old) \$10.00. There will also be an additional \$2.50 assessed for international postage on the newsletter. The motion passed.

The FPS website will continue to be updated and improved by Joan Herrera and Roger Portell. There will be small photos of FPS officers - each with a brief bio. Barbara Toomey will compile an up-to-date listing of Florida fossil clubs for the website. Past newsletters are archived on the site also. Officers need to write a one-paragraph bio. for the website and forward it to Marge Fantozzi at nfantozzi1@cfl.rr.com

George Hecht will be acknowledging new members and will send them an information packet including the latest newsletter.

Roger Portell moved and Marge Fantozzi seconded that FPS allot \$1500.00 for the purchase of a new society laptop computer and a digital projector for programs. The motion passed.

Because the stock of Robert Sinbaldi's books owned by FPS is not selling, there was agreement by the board to give them away to members at future meetings.

On future FPS fieldtrips, museum staff and trip leaders will wear lime-green safety vests. The general membership will wear orange vests.

There were three nominations for three society board members. They are: Gary Schmelz, Jonathan Bloch, and Phyllis Diegel.

Melissa Cole will ask Russell Brown of Fla. Fossil Hunters if he would design a new tee-shirt for Florida Paleontological Society.

It was moved by Roger Portell and seconded by George Hecht that we purchase "bronzini" for casts for awards and auction items. The motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Marcia M. Wright Secretary

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 cooperations 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 X

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.

President's Address

FPS Members,

I hope you enjoyed the wonderful meeting we had last November in Bradenton. I want to thank the Toomey's for all their hard work arranging the activities at the meeting. It was a beautiful weekend. You could not have asked for better weather. If you missed the fall meeting, I encourage you to try to make the spring meeting in May. The spring meeting will be in Alabama at the Point-A-Dam. It is a great place to collect tiny fossil crabs, and lots of shark teeth.

Please remember that 2008 membership dues are owed in January. Please send your dues to George Hecht. This is the last year that the dues are \$15.00. Starting in the year 2009, dues for membership of FPS will be raised by \$5.00/yr. The new dues will be: individual \$20.00; couple \$25.00; associate (under 18 yrs. old) \$10.00. There will also be an additional \$2.50 assessed for international postage on the newsletter. The increase in dues reflects increased postage and copying cost. This is the first increase in membership dues in many years. I wish everyone well and hope you have a wonderful year! I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the next meeting. Until then, find great fossils to share!

Your president, Melissa Cole.

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. Persons interested in FPS membership need only send their names, addresses, and appropriate dues to the Secretary, Florida Paleontological Society, Inc., at the address on page 2. Please make checks payable to the FPS. Members receive the FPS newsletter, Florida Fossil Invertebrates, Fossil Species of Florida, 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 Soceity, Inc. Newsletter, at the address inside the front cover.

News from the FLMNH Invertebrate Paleontology Division

The state's Invertebrate Paleontology Collection (IP) continues to grow rapidly through curation efforts of Roger Portell, Sean Roberts, Alex Kittle, George Hecht, and students and volunteers. Thus far, 1,737,547 specimens have been fully-curated (including databasing) and placed into IP's formed collections. Many more specimens are in various stages of curation and with the help of the recently awarded (March 2007) three-year National Science Foundation (NSF) collec-

tion improvement grant, many more specimens will be fully-curated over the next two years.

The IP online website (http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/invertpaleo/ search.asp) continues to be very popular and almost weekly we add images of type and figured specimens, along with some common Florida taxa.

In 2007 and early 2008, individual fossils and fossil collections and paleontological literature were donated on a regular basis. Most noteworthy were: Claudia and Tim Hart's donation of plete tests with spines of imen was collected by Claudia's father Charles projects as will Phyllis Diegel's donation of numerous Melongena diegelae. Craig and Laurie Samuel continue to kindly provide comparative echinoderms from Europe and Australia.

An especially generous gift of a new warehouse and office complex by Mike Toomey greatly helped alleviate overcrowding and storage issues for our division. We now have high quality offsite storage for incoming collections and equipment. Thank you Mike!

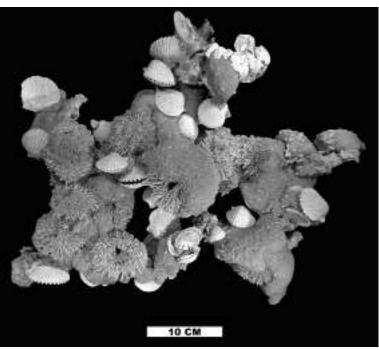
Financial support during 2007 for numerous IP collection and research initiatives and IP student support is also gratefully acknowledged. Thank you to Barbara

> and Reed Toomey, Jim and Lori Toomey, Wally Ward, and the South West Florida Fossil Club

IP staff conducted a considerable amount of fieldwork in 2007, mostly in the SE USA and Cuba. Most noteworthy that in February Roger was invited to collect fossil sites at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay (GTMO). He, Jim Toomey, and Col. Turk McCleskey spent a week making initial surveys of numerous Pleistocene coastal They returned to sites. GTMO in July to augment those collections and to locate additional sites in-

As mentioned above, Doug Jones and Roger received a \$282,000 three-year project "Computerization and integration of exceptional inver-

tebrate fossil research collections." The grant is used to hire personnel to rapidly curate collections transferred to IP during the last decade. These include: Tulane University Collection of Cenozoic mollusks; Paulay Collection of Pliocene and Pleistocene mollusks and corals from uplifted islands in Polynesia: Antarctic Collection of Eocene mollusks from University of Illinois; and University of South Florida collections made (2005-2007) during the NSF funded Research Experience for Undergraduates grant. Additionally, Steve Donovan (Naturalis, The Netherlands), Roger, and others received a



a large slab of sandstone *This fabulous fossil slab containing numerous*, cluding one Miocene site. embedded with 12 com- complete Lytechinus variegatus tests and scallops the sea urchin Lytechinus was collected in Cape Coral by Charles Nelson. variegatus and numerous His family recently donated the specimen (UF grant from the NSF for a scallop shells. The spec- 118114) to the FLMNH.

Nelson in Cape Coral. John Waldrop donated 55 boxes of Florida fossil samples collected by Druid Wilson along with 231 reprints. The family of William "Gene" Hamm of High Springs donated 22 large, sliced, and polished coral heads collected in Florida and Georgia rivers. These beautiful specimens will be used in an upcoming display and for teaching and research. David Grabda and Greta Polites donated a rare undescribed crab from the Mosaic Mine in North Carolina and an aberrant sinistral cone from the Chipola Formation, respectively. Both will be used in upcoming research generous grant from National Geographic to collect and document a rare starfish bed they discovered in Carriacou, the Grenadines. This Miocene starfish deposit is the first of its kind ever discovered in the West Indies.

In addition to working on several issues of the popular Florida Fossil Invertebrates series, Roger recent-

ly published a co-authored book chapter entitled "Contrasting patterns and mechanisms of extinction during the Eocene-Oligocene transition in Jamaica" with S. Donovan and Daryl Domning (Howard University); co-authored a paper with Gary Schmelz entitled "The Epitoniidae (Gastropoda: Ptenoglossa) from the lower Alum Bluff Group (lower to middle Miocene) of Florida; co-authored an article with Rodney Feldmann (Kent State Univerand Morris, 1975 (Deca-



Col. Turk McCleskey (left) and Jim Toomey standsity) entitled "First report ing in front of coastal exposure at GTMO, Cuba. of Costacopluma Collins Note the large in-place coral above their heads.

poda: Brachyura: Retroplumidae) from the Eocene of Alabama. The crab described in this paper comes only from the Point-A-Dam site (along with lots of shark teeth and snake vertebrae) which is where the Spring FPS field trip will be held. Roger also co-authored a

field guide entitled "The geology, stratigraphy, and paleontology of Reids, Bells, and Roses bluffs in northeastern Florida. Furthermore, he and his co-authors have several papers in press describing new species of Florida Eocene Conus; a new species of Eocene Campanile from Jamaica; Miocene sharks of Carriacou; and an overview paper on all known Neogene crabs of the circum-Caribbean.

Sean has been raphy of the type and figured collection for the IP website

his work on the organization, cataloguing, and photog-

Alex Kittle is our new curatorial assistant. His is a grant funded position to help identify and catalog the huge backlog of fossils residing at Dickin-

son Hall and the IP warehouse. Alex is currently working with the Fasciolaridae, a large family of predatory gastropods which includes the familiar "true tulip" (Fasciolaria tulipa). He has also been preparing and identifying material collected by Roger Portell and Jim Toomey from GTMO. Alex is a recent graduate of Georgia College where he received a bachelor's and master's degree in biology. His research involved description of a new fossil flora from western North Dakota that he discovered

three years ago. He also has field experience collecting for the National Park Service in Badlands National Park and Grand Teton National Park. This past summer Alex spent time as an intern for Ashfall State Park in Nebraska, he served as an interpreter for park guests and gave

> demonstrations in fossil excavation and preparation.

> George Hecht continues the identification and curation of the R.A. Edwards ostracode collection. In addition, he is working on projects including a revision of the Eocene Florida Ostracoda: Eocene, nearshore Ostracoda from Seven Rivers, Jamaica; and processing sediment samples recently brought back from Cuba. Not to rest on his laurels, George has been promoted to a full time position overseeing Dickinson Hall.



busy working with the Roger (left) and Col. Turk McCleskey collecting new NSF-funded employ-ees on the nuances of da-bulk stratigraphic samples from quarry wall at tabase entry and catalogu- GTMO, Cuba. Note the abundance of broken cor- facilities operations at ing. He is also continuing als branches indicative of a storm deposit.

The Gary S. Morgan Student Research Award Winner announced....

Larisa Grawe DeSantis is a graduate student at the University of Florida as a Ph. D. Candidate in Zoology, with a concentration in paleontology. She was presented the 2007 Gary S. Morgan Student Research Award in December. Financial assistance from this award will go towards isotopic analytical costs related to her research determining the paleoecology of the late Pliocene Haile 7G fossil site.

Project title: PALEOECOLOGY OF AN ANOMALOUS LATE PLIOCENE FOSSIL SITE, HAILE 7G, FLORIDA: EVIDENCE FROM STABLE ISOTOPES OF HERBIVEROUS MAMMALS

Project summary: The Haile 7G Site, a late Pliocene fossil locality in Newberry, Florida, contains unique mammalian fauna consisting of new species, abundant tapirs and xenarthrans, and rare horses and carnivores. This highly fossiliferous locality yields an estimated one skeleton per day of field excavations and is anomalous in regards to the abundances of tapirs as compared to temporally and geographically similar fossil sites. Elucidating the paleoenvironment of Haile 7G is necessary to better understanding the context of mammalian evolution over the last 2 million years and to comprehending how a tapir-rich fauna partitioned dietary niches. The paleoecology of the Haile 7G Site will be determined by analyzing stable isotopes from fossil mammal teeth. Specifically, stable carbon and oxygen isotopes will be used to:

- 1) Determine the paleoecology of this site, identifying the dietary niches of the herbivorous mammalian taxa present.
- 2) Quantify seasonal variation using serial samples (equally spaced samples parallel to the growth axis of the tooth) from horse and tapir teeth.
- 3) Compare the bulk and serial samples to three highly relevant fossil sites including the late Pliocene glacial Inglis 1A Site, the early Pleistocene interglacial Leisey 1A Site, and the Neogene Gray Fossil Site (~4.5 7 million years old).

The results of this work will significantly improve our understanding of the ancient climate and ecology of the Haile 7G Site, elucidating how it compares to other temporally and taxonomically similar localities.

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FPS Product Sales	
Prices are for current FPS members only	
Shipping and Handling Extra	
Vinac 15 (price per pound)	\$7.00
MC Thomas, Beach and Bank Collecting	\$5.00
H Converse, Paleo Preperation Techniques	\$10.00
Hulbert, Fossil Vertebrates of Florida	\$31.00
Florida Fossil Invertebrates	
Part 1, Eocene Echinoids	\$5.00
Part 2, Oligocene and Miocene Echinoids	\$5.00
Part 3, Pliocene and Pleistocene Echinoids	\$5.00
Part 4, Pliocene and Pleistocene	
Decapod Crustaceans	\$5.00
Part 5, Eocene, Oligocene, and	
Miocene Decapod Crustaceans	\$5.00
Part 6, Larger Foraminifera (Introduction)	\$5.00
Part 7, Larger Foraminifera (Common Taxa)	\$5.00
Part 8, Brachiopods	\$5.00
Part 9, Mollusca (Shoal River Formation)	\$7.00
Part 10, Eocene and Oligocene Corals	TBA
Fossil Species of Florida	
Number 1, Mammut americanum	\$4.00
Number 2, Tapirus veroensis	\$4.00
T-shirt (sm - 2xl)	\$10.00
Coffee Mug	\$4.00
Sales Tax (Florida residents) add	6.25%
To purchase the above items, please contact:	
fps@flmnh.ufl.edu	
or	
George Hecht, Treasurer	
Florida Museum of Natural History Box 117800	
University of Florida	
Gainesville, Florida 32611-7800	

FLORIDA PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Mail completed form to:

Florida Paleontological Society University of Florida, Box 117800 Gainesville, FL 32611-7800

Name		
Address		
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TYPE OF M	IEMBERSHIP	
	INSTITUTIONAL (\$15.00)	
3. COUPLES (\$20.00) 4.	FAMILY (3 or more \$25.00)	
5. LIFE (\$500.00) 6.	ASSOCIATE (under 18 \$5.00)	
BIOGRAPHIC	AL FACT SHEET	EACH YEAR!
1. NUMBER OF YEARS OF INTEREST IN PALEONTOLOGY		
2. WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR STATUS: COLLECTOR CAL POSITION JUST STARTING	CCASIONAL DEALER FULL T	IME DEALER PROFESSION-
3. PRIMARY AREAS OF INTEREST: VERTEBRATE PLEISTOCENE PLIOCENE MIOCENE OLIGOCENE EARLIER INVERTEBRATE INVERT	BOTANY M	IICRO
4. LIST ANY PREFERRED TYPES (Echinoids, Crabs, Horses, Sloths,	Plants etc.)	
5. LIST ANY PUBLISHED WORKS ON PALEONTOLOGICAL SUB	ECTS.	
FOUND	ED 19 ¹⁸	
6. DO YOU BUY TRADE FIND FOSSILS?		
7. LIST ANY SKILLS OR ABILITIES THAT MAY BE OF USE TO THE PUTER USE, GRAPHICS SKILLS, SPEAKING, PHOTOGRAPHY, PU		,

 $8. \ LIST\ ANY\ UNUSUAL\ SPECIMENS\ FOUND,\ CIRCUMSTANCES\ UNDER\ WHICH\ THEY\ WERE\ LOCATED\ AND\ THEIR\ DISPOSITION.$

PLEASE USE AN ADDITIONAL SHEET IF REQUIRED. THANK YOU!

Payments, contributions, or gifts to the Florida Paleontological Society are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Dues payments may be deductible by members as ordinary or necessary business expenses. We recommend that you consult with your tax advisor.