

Rock Talk

In This Issue

- March Club Meeting Program
- The January Meeting as I Saw it
- Gem Bags
- February Meeting Photos
- The David Letasi Report
- Message from Our New Club President
- December Tuesday Morning Photos
- Field Trip to the Vulcan Mine
- Secretary Report
- What is It?
- Ultraviolet LED Flashlight
- Our Members in Action
- How Fossils are Created
- Bench Tips

March 2018



Rock Talk

March 14th Meeting Program

Tom Mitchell, from the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies (SFMS), will be the presenter at our March 14th meeting. He will be discussing the activities for the upcoming year at the William Holland School and tell us about the services provided by SEMS. Tom will also talk about faceting.

Tom is the newly elected president of the United States Faceters Guild and teaches at the William Holland School of Lapidary Arts.

Refreshments will be available and we will have the 50/50 drawing, and several door prizes.

The Meeting as I Saw it



by
Dorwin Skinner
Club Vice President



There was no doubt that this was going to be a special meeting. The parking lot was packed when I arrived and when I signed in, I was number thirty-five on the sign-in sheet. There were many faces that I did not recognize. This meeting had the makings of being one of the largest meetings ever. Maybe the large attendance was because Mark Moore would be giving a



Kate with her well organized and beautifully presented collection.
Dorwin Skinner photo

presentation about meteorites. Whatever the reason, there was a bunch of people in our clubhouse. There were lots of specimens for show and tell and lots of stuff for sale. The 50/50 table was loaded with prizes. When Judith called the meeting to order there was no doubt that this was the largest meeting that I had ever seen. (Sixty-seven guests and members signed the sheet this evening). Wow they called the 50/50 number and I was the winner. That was a first for me. Then Mark began his presentation and the room went silent. Lots of questions at the end and lots of samples to be seen. His largest specimen was the size of a bowling ball. Can't wait for the next month, I hope to see you there.

Dues are Overdue

Our club year runs from January to January, so it's time to sign up for the next club year. Janet will be accepting membership forms and payments at the club meeting, or you can send the form and your check to:

Withlacoochee Rockhounds
PO Box 5634
Spring Hill, FL, 34611-5634

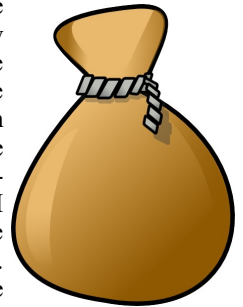
We will be updating the club roster and email list after the March club meeting.

The Cover

The cover is a photo of a large piece of tiger eye, owned by Ralph Barber. Tiger eye is composed chiefly of silicon dioxide (SiO₂) and is colored mainly by iron oxide.

Gem Bags

We need to start now to prepare for selling gem bags at our gem show in December. We already have nice donations from Dave Davis, Mike Stone and Peggy Burns, Dan Hutchinson, and Elaine and Rovie Alford. I am sure others have donated rocks, gems, and fossils, but I failed to record their names. I have promises from many other members. We also need many bags for the gems. Cloth; patterns or solid colors will do. Or we can use plastic zip lock bags, because they will be labeled. The bags can be homemade or bought; all will be appreciated. We should have 500 bags by show time, so let's get busy.



Please bring all items to the our monthly meetings and give them to me or leave them with Judith Birx.

Thank you for your help.
Gloria DuPont
Gem Bag Coordinator

Withlacoochee Rockhounds
is now on Facebook

https://www.facebook.com/withlacoocheerockhounds1/?ref=page_internal



Next Meeting, Wednesday, March 14th at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

March Meeting Photos

Photos by Dorwin Skinner and Mike Stone



Mike Stone photo

Grinding and polishing on the Dixie machine.



Mike Stone photo



Mike Stone photo

Mark Moore talking about meteorites.



Mike Stone photo

Melodye and Dorwin



Mike Stone photo

A well attended meeting.



Dorwin Skinner photo

Mark with his 28 pound meteorite



Dorwin Skinner photo

Grinding and polishing on the Dixie machine.



Mike Stone photo

John talking with Gabriel



Dorwin Skinner photo

A nice piece of fucite ?



Mike Stone photo

Judith and Cole announcing the winning numbers

Withlacoochee Rockhounds



Saber Tooth Cats

Most of you know that I did a lecture about saber tooth cats at our rock and gem show in December. I know that many of our members were busy helping guests and dealers, attending to their needs and were unable to attend the lecture. So I want to offer some information about these amazing fossil creatures in this article. Frequently they are called “saber tooth tigers”, well actually they are not really considered to be a tiger. They are both in the family Felidae, but are separated into the Pantherine cats (tigers and lions), the round-toothed cats, and the Machairodont cats, those having saber canines. Florida is rich in saber cat pre-history, but their fossils tend to be fairly rare. The largest collection of their bones is housed at the University of Florida Paleontology Collections Lab and they only have about ten skulls. Some of those examples are fragmentary.



Barbourofelis and Teloceras

The earliest Florida false saber cat genus, Barbourofelis, appeared here about nine and a half million years ago and was found near Archer, FL. In the same bone bed there occurred a true saber cat called Nimravides. Two very rare five million year old saber cats appeared as fossils in Polk County in the Phosphate Mines, and the other in the Withlacoochee River. Amphimachairodus fossils occurred just south of the



Barbourofelis loveorum

Route 200 Bridge in Citrus County, FL. The other cat called Rhizosmilus fitei, from Bone Valley was named after its discoverer, Barbara Fite, member of the Tampa



Rhizosmilodon fiteae jaw

Bay Fossil Club. In 1983 a new saber cat was found in a quarry near Haile, FL. (West of Gainesville, approximately four miles northeast of Newberry). The collector discovered the remains of two scimitar toothed cats called Xenosmilus. We know there were at least two species of saber cat living together during the early and late Ice Age here in Florida. The scimitar toothed cat, Xenosmilus, and a Dirk Toothed saber cat, Smilodon gracilis, lived side by side during the early Ice Age

about 1.5 million years ago. Both of their bones were found at the same site in Ruskin, FL. The most rare saber tooth cat of all is Homotherium, and only the teeth were found in a Quarry near Reddick FL. It lived alongside of Smilodon fatalis, the famous La Brea Tar Pit cat. Both of their bones are found here in Florida with other late Ice Age animal remains.

The first Florida saber cat (Smilodon) fossils were



Gracilis dorsal skull



Nimravides uf24461 med

Continued on next page

Our Website
www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Dave Letasi Report from page four

found in 1888 near Ocala, FL and a saber was discovered in a cave near Lecanto, FL, in 1929. The scimitar saber toothed cats, like Homotherium, have sabers that are thinner and shorter than the dirked toothed saber tooth cats {Smilodon}. The earliest most primitive saber tooth cats were called "false saber tooth cats", like Barbourofelis. These early cat inner ear structures differ from the true saber tooth and modern cats living today. Saber tooth cat fossils have been found occasionally in the Withlacoochee River, and one site is next to the bridge that crosses the Cross Florida Barge Canal on US 19. The last saber toothed cats lived here about 13,000 years ago and became extinct at about the same time as the other last giant mammals of the Ice Age. The first people that entered North America would have shared the same habitat with the saber tooth cats. The question should be, who hunted whom? You may learn more about these cats at floridamuseum.ufl.edu/vertpaleo/home.



Machairodus jaw lat with 4

It is entirely possible to find saber tooth cat fossils in our area, and I hope you are the next one to collect remains from one of these rare creatures..

Have a great March and keep collecting.

Welcome New Members

Welcome new Withlacoochee Rockhounds club members: Emily and Douglas Burgner, **New Port Richey**; Sandy Draper, **Spring Hill**; Nicholas Londono, **Spring Hill**; Colen, Elizabeth, Eric, and Robin, Kessel, **Brooksville**

Florida Gem Shows

Central Florida Mineral & Gem Society Inc.
 Rock, Mineral, Gem, Jewelry & Fossil
 April 6th, 7th & 8th, 2018
 Florida National Guard Armory
 2809 S. Fern Creek Ave., Orlando, FL 32806.
 Fri. 1pm to 6pm, Sat. 10am to 6pm and Sun. 10am to 5pm
 Admission: Adults \$5, Kids \$2, Scouts with uniforms free. Website: www.cfmgs.org.
 Contact: Salvatore Sansone 321-278-9294 ssfossilhunter@aol.com

Mini Miners Monthly is Back

This is a publication specifically for young mineral collectors and enthusiasts. The January issue is available for downloading on our club website, www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com. Go to **RELATED LINKS** and scroll down. We will post the latest magazines when they become available. *Mini Miners Monthly* can be of interest to adults too.

The February issue is ready to be downloaded.

President's Message



Judith Birx

Wow! Another great meeting!

It Looks like we have field trips in the works and we will need volunteers to help put them together. Everyone who is interested in going to the Vulcan Mine in Brooksville on March 10th can contact Dave Letasi. His e-mail is letasi123@yahoo.com. Those of you that are interested in attending the Graves Mountain field trip on April 27,28,29 can contact me Judith 352-587-1702 or talk to Lauren Bell at a club meeting. Our 50/50 drawing at the February meeting was an astonishing \$85.00. Can you believe that! If this keeps up maybe we can get another cabbng machine or saw! The possibilities!

One thing I have noticed is how diverse our club is becoming. We will need to look at what all of our needs are. For instance, I saw that we have a children of different ages attending our meetings and I ask that we all pay attention to them when talking to them or near them.

Tom Mitchell will be our speaker at the March meeting, and I hear that he has a lot of information that you might find interesting. He is from the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies and he will be explaining what part they play in our organization. Well, if you know me, you know that I could go on and on.

One last note, if I fail to remember to perform a task or responsibility, I will not be offended if you remind me to do so. So please do.

Thanks for making my experience in this club a truly beautiful one!



Mike Stone photo

Melodye getting the class ready for the project.



Dorwin Skinner photo

Barb Clark getting assistance from Melodye



Dorwin Skinner photo

Melodye working with Gary



Dorwin Skinner photo



Dorwin Skinner photo

Pendant by Peg Burns



Dorwin Skinner photo

Pendant by Barb Clark

Tuesday Workshop
at the
Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens' Center

The Withlacoochee Rockhounds is giving workshops on wire wrapping (stones), chain making (jump rings) and possibly other related skills at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens' Center in Spring Hill. The workshops are normally on the **first Tuesday of the month from 9:00 AM until 12:00 noon**. The cost per workshop is \$1.00. To participate in the workshops, one must be a member of the *Withlacoochee Rockhounds*, which covers dues to the *Weeki Wachee Citizens Club*.

Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens' Center.
3357 Susan Dr.
Spring Hill FL 34606

For more information call Judith at: 352-587-1702

Next Workshop
March 6th at 900 AM

The project for March will be a wire wrapping. There is no cost for the class, just the standard one-dollar per person charge for the use of the building.



Hernando County, FL

Field Trip to the Vulcan Mine

by Dave Letasi

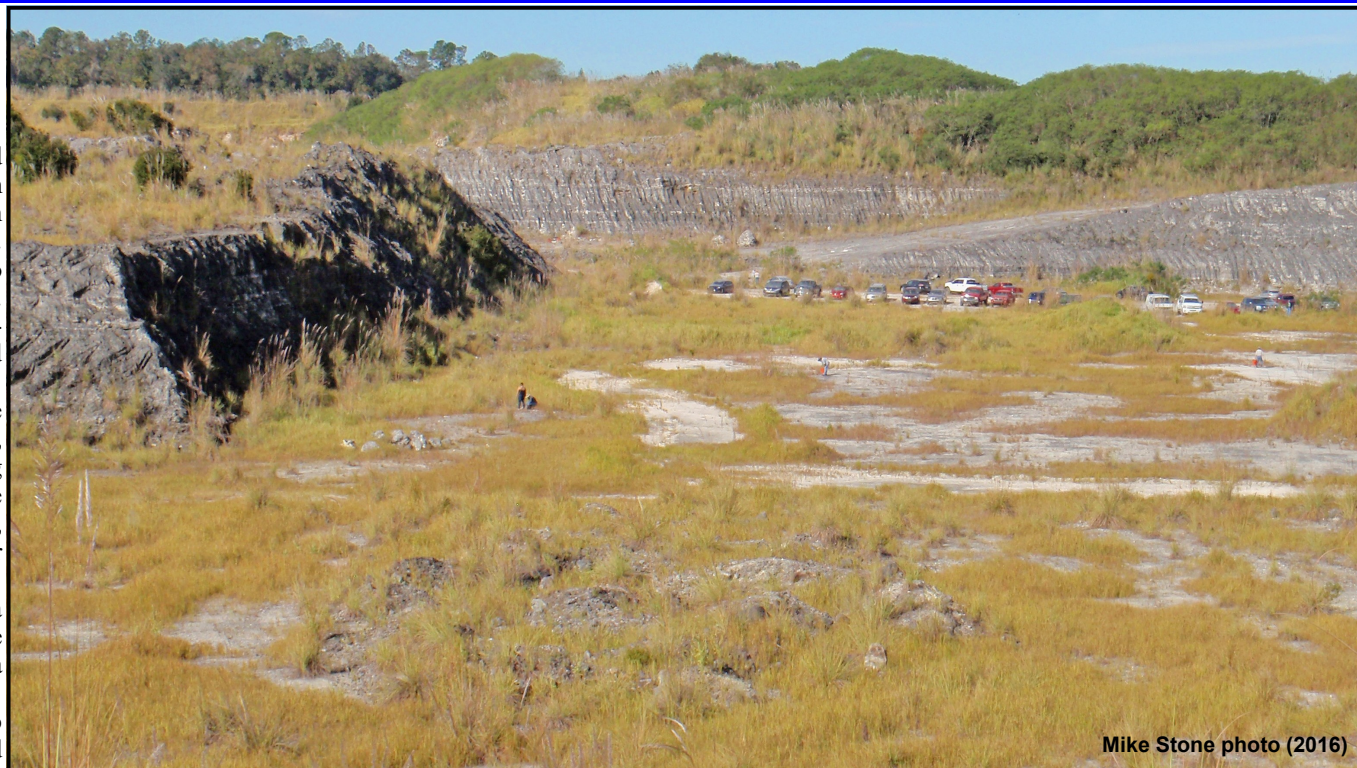
Club members are invited to participate in a field trip to the Vulcan Mine in North Brooksville on march 10th. Everyone should arrive by 8:30 AM. This is an opportunity to dig for fossils, rocks, and minerals. There are no restrooms at the site so you will need to hide behind a big rock, of which there are plenty. Bring food, plenty of water, a hat with a brim, and sun-screen. Rock hammers, chisels, pry bars, buckets, and magnifying loops will be useful.

Saul Mendoza is the Vulcan Mine manger and he will escort guests, as a caravan in their own vehicles, to the collecting area. The gate will be locked during the trip and rock collectors will be escorted out of the mine around 2:00 PM. Other clubs can also attend, since the second Saturday of each month from October through May are open dates for local rock clubs.

The entrance and meeting place is about a half a mile north of 491 (Citrus Way) on US 98 and is on the west side of US 98. There is a small parking area where people meet.

That same weekend, the Tampa bay fossil club will be having their annual fossil show, so there should be less collectors than usual.

I will be putting together several field trips for the fall and 2019.



Mike Stone photo (2016)

This is one of the areas where clubs were allowed to collect in 2016. It is a large open pit that was excavated by heavy equipment as limestone was removed. Fossils, chert, calcite, and calcite crystals can be found on the ground, in piles of rock, and by digging. Look closely and you will see rock hounds searching for specimens, and also you will see parked vehicles in the distance.



Show Us Your Stuff

We're always looking for information for the *Rock Talk*. Club members would enjoy seeing other members' rock cutting and polishing equipment, display cabinets, projects, and favorite specimens. Take a photo and send it to your editors along with a description and we will be glad to include it in our newsletter.

Mike Stone
n1ve@amsat.org

Your Favorite Specimen

We are always looking for something of interest for our club members. We're sure many club members have specimens in their collections that would be of interest to others in the club. If you would send us a digital photograph of your specimen we can publish it in the *Rock Talk*. A bit of information such as what it is, when, and where you found it would be great. If you don't have a digital camera, bring your specimen to a club meeting for others to see, and perhaps someone at the meeting could photograph it for the next issue of *Rock Talk*.

Rock Talk editors: Mike Stone and Peggy Burns
n1ve@amsat.org

Secretary's Report



by
Melody Steverson



Withlacoochee Rockhounds Monthly Meeting Minutes 2-14-18

- The meeting was called to order by club president Judith Birx at 7:00 pm.
- We all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silent prayer.
- There were nine new members to recognize; Eric Elizabeth, Robin, and Colen Kessel, Angela Bennett, Sandy Draper, Doug and Emily Burgner, and Nicholas Londono.
- There were ten guests in attendance
- Mark Moore made a motion to accept the minutes of our January meeting as printed in the newsletter, seconded by Tommy Blackmon. The motion was passed by all members.
- Club treasurer Janet Wheeler gave the Treasurer's report.

Old Business

- Club president Birx stressed that all members should pay their dues, as they were now late.
- Club president Birx announced the upcoming Silversmithing class and encouraged interested members to join. She explained that there is only room for eight students, so if there are more than eight who sign up, a lottery system will decide who will be in the first class.

New Business

- Club president Birx announced that there will field trips coming up to Graves Mountain and Hogg Mine in April and May. Check your calendars and plan to join us. She also asked Dave Letasi to help with planning fossil collecting field trips.
- She also asked any members that have not provided their email address to Mike Stone, to do so.
- Club president Birx stated there will be a Board of Directors meeting on March 20th at 6:30 pm in the

Weeki Wachee Senior Center, where we have our monthly meetings. She encouraged interested members to attend.

- Dave Letasi announced that he met with the Hernando County Preservation Committee and had been appointed liaison to the committee, proposing a rock trail where people can walk and enjoy the native rocks and fossils of the area. He also stated that there are museums in both Inverness and Floral City where there are significant archaeological and geological discoveries from Florida on display.
- Club president Birx reminded members who have business cards to give Mike Stone a copy of the card to be displayed in an upcoming issue of the Rock Talk.
- Next month's refreshments will be provided by Suzie Letasi, Dorwin Skinner, Katie Schmidt, and Roberta Oldread.
- Dave Letasi made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Tommy Blackmon seconded. The motion was passed by all.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Secretary Melody Steverson.

Ultraviolet LED Flashlight

During our gem show last December, I was talking with Dave Davis about amber, when he showed me how amber fluoresces under ultraviolet light. Dave had an aluminum, ultraviolet LED flashlight and held it to a piece of amber. The amber glowed a bright green/yellow color.



Peg and I bought a couple of the flashlights from eBay for \$9.99 each. <https://www.ebay.com/itm/LIVABIT-UV-LED-Flash-Light-Blood-Fake-Money-Finger-Print-Detector-Black-Light/122432986059?ssPageName=STRK%3AMEBIDX%3AIT&trksid=p2060353.m2749.l2649>

According to the on-line information about the flashlight, it can be used to identify blood, fake money, fingerprints, and scorpions. The flashlight will also cause fluorescent minerals to glow. Real amber will glow either blue or green under ultraviolet radiation.

editor

What is It?

Can you identify the specimen below?



Answer in the April Rock Talk.

Last month's "What is It?" was
Natrolite



The answer to this month's "What is It?"
Can be found on our website.

www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com



Amber in the sunshine.



Amber in ultraviolet light.

Withlacoochee Rockhounds Rock Talk

Our Members in Action

Here are business cards sent in by club members. Most are involved in areas very much associated with what our club is all about. Send us your business card and we will include it in an issue of Rock Talk.

Also

Business Card Size Advertisement

Our club can use the income generated by selling business card size advertisements in our newsletter and website. If you know of anyone who might benefit by advertising in the *Rock Talk*, please let them know that we can post their ads for ten dollars (\$10) per month. **An ad subscription for one year will include a one-year club membership.** The *Rock Talk* is distributed to more than only our club members, it is available on our website and therefore it has the potential for being distributed to over one thousand readers each month.

Contact newsletter editor Mike Stone at:

n1ve@amsat.org
603-524-0468

Rovie Alford
Lapidary Equipment Repairs & Sales
Faceting, Cabbing, Tumblers, Saws and
Silversmithing
Phone 270-999-9144 roviea712@yahoo.com

**Celtic Designs
by Melodye**
Ancient echos from the Celtic past
brought to life in stone and metal
Melodye Steverson 407-760-4472
www.DesignsByMelodye.com

CUSTOM LEATHER CREATIONS
BIKER OWNED - 30YEARS EXPERIENCE
Alterations & Repairs
Custom Made Leather Goods
Anytime for Appointment or Orders
ROBERTA
352-302-2487
bertahdhugger98@yahoo.com

Jewels by Jude
Judith Birx
Member of Withlacoochee Rockhounds
Judithbirx@hotmail.com
Natural Stone Jewelry, Wire Wrapping,
Crystals, Beading
352-587-1702

Lauren M Bell
Artist/Owner
Facebook.com/MadHouseMindWorks
www.MadHouseMindWorks.etsy.com
MAD HOUSE MIND WORKS
Handmade Steampunk Style Accessories
Award Winning Designs (2013 RAW Honolulu)
MadHouseMindWorks@Gmail.com
Other designs offered include:
Wire Wraps, Crystals and
Cast Aluminum Ant Hill Sculptures

RALPH BARBER
STONE JEWELRY
bottle wind chimes
Hernando County Farmers Market
US 19
Spring Hill Fl
352 200 6852
barbersbloomers@hotmail.com

Emily & Doug Burgner
9826 Island Harbor Dr
Port Richey, FL 34668
386-385-3380
Safetydoug55@verizon.net

KELLY JOHNSON
MINERALS*FOSSILS*CABOCHONS
FLINTKNAPPED STONE BLADE KNIVES
buy / sell / trade retail / wholesale
...Yes I buy collections, lapidary equipment, etc...
email: KellyMineralsFossils@aol.com
facebook: Kelly minerals fossils
239-940-9773 SPRING HILL, FL

GG2 TREASURES
A Unique Rock and Mineral Shop
Julie and Mark
OWNERS
gg2treasuresrockshop.com
julielayne33@gmail.com
We Love Rocks!! Like us on f i

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK
facebook.com/gailsgifhut
ROCKS, CRYSTALS, JEWELRY, TAPESTRIES,
OILS, AND MUCH MORE
Gail's Gift Hut
gailsgifhut@gmail.com Howards Flea Market
FIND US ON ETSY M 13,15,17,19
etsy.com/shop/gailsgifhut HOMOSASSA, FL. 34446

How Fossils are Created a primer

by Mike Stone

Recently BBC.com published a story about fossils, written by John Pickrell. At the start of the article he quotes from a book by Bill Bryson, *A Short History of Nearly Everything*, that "Every fossil is a small miracle". Then Pickrell goes through a series of explanations of how once living organisms become fossilized.

There are many environmental, chemical, and geological variables that must occur before the remains of life can become fossilized. These processes are extremely unlikely to occur. According to Pickrell, "Fossilization is so unlikely that scientists estimate less one-tenth of 1% of all the animal species that have ever lived have become fossils. And far fewer of that tiny number of fossils have been found.

Below are some of the variables that determine if remains will become fossilized.

The size of the remains is a consideration. A human fossil is more likely to be found than the fossil of a worm or jellyfish. However Pickrell doesn't mention numbers. It's obvious that the number of remains would also determine the abundance of a particularly type of fossil.

Taphonomists (Those who study how organisms decay and become fossilized.) say that it is important for the body to remain in good condition long enough for fossilization to place. The remains usually must be buried under sediment and then altered physically and chemically, deep underground to become a fossil.

The remains can't be eaten and scattered by scavengers, or exposed to the elements for too long. Floods that dump huge amounts of sediment or volcanic eruptions that smother things in mud and ash work well at preserving the remains long enough for them to become fossilized. One theory for the occurrence of dinosaur bone beds are drought conditions that killed the dinosaurs, followed by floods

that moved the sediments and buried them. The best places for remains to become fossilized are lakes, floodplains and rivers, or the bottom of the sea. It is also important for the remains to be buried quickly. This works well where rivers flow from mountains causing erosion and carrying a lot of sediment, as well as a coastal delta or floodplain, where river sediment is rapidly deposited as the water heads out to sea.

Ideally the environment for fossil formation should be free of oxygen, (anoxic) where animals and microorganisms that would digest and disturb the remains can't survive. A depression for sediment, preferably with standing water, such as a pond, lake, estuary, or ocean, encourages the development of an anoxic environment.

Even if all of the conditions are perfect for the formation of fossils, they can be subjected to destruction due to tectonism. For millions of years fossils are often covered with more and more sediment, while being driven deep into the Earth's crust, where heat and pressure build up, aiding in the fossilization process. However, in time, the fossils could be shifted to a much greater depth causing them to melt.

For fossils to be found they need to be on or near the surface of the Earth. The fossils that we find have risen from deep below the surface by forces such tectonic plate movement (convergence) or have become exposed by weathering, or a sea level changes.

There are fossils and there are also sub-fossils. Anything up to around 50,000 years old is known as a 'subfossil'. These are largely made up of the original tissues of organisms. Woolly mammoth fossils with fur, skin, and other body parts are in this category.

For fossils to last for millions of years, they need to become permineralized. Permineralization is the replacement of cells with minerals. This process can take millions of years. Bones permineralize most rapidly when mineral-rich water can flow through them, imbuing

(saturating or permeating) them with minerals such as iron and calcium. Calcium ions, which can precipitate into calcite, a form of calcium carbonate, are especially good because they form a cement and cover the remains of life, which protect over millions of years. Also silicates, from sand, are durable minerals that preserve the fossil while it completely permineralizes.

When Peg and I visited the hot springs area of Yellowstone National Park, we observed dead tree stumps standing in hot, heavily mineralized water. We assumed that we were watching the fossilization (permineralization) of the wood.

One of the best ways to preserve life in its original form is when the bodies of insects, birds, and other small animals become trapped in tree resin (pitch) that eventually ages and becomes amber.

"Molecular polymerization, resulting from high pressures and temperatures produced by overlying sediment, transforms the resin first into copal. Sustained heat and pressure drives off terpenes and results in the formation of amber.

For this to happen, the resin must be resistant to decay. Many trees produce resin, but in the majority of cases this deposit is broken down by physical and biological processes. Exposure to sunlight, rain, microorganisms (such as bacteria and fungi), and extreme temperatures tends to disintegrate resin." Wikipedia (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amber>)

Another method of preserving the remains of life are in tar pits of the kind that have preserved saber-toothed cats and mammoths at La Brea in Los Angeles.

Remains can also be preserved by freezing, such as on a mountain or in a glacier, as what happened to Ötzi the iceman, found in the European Alps in 1991.

Fossils are common in some areas of our planet, but the conditions that created the fossils were quite special, requiring much more than only time.

Withlacoochee Rockhounds



Bench Tips
by
Brad Smith

Bench Tips for Jewelry Making and Broom Casting for Creative Jewelry are available on Amazon

Modifying Pliers

Pliers-1

Sometimes a few changes to your tools can make work go faster and improve the quality at the same time. Stock tools need to be polished and can be customized using standard jewelry skills. Here's an example:

While making a lot of chainmaille, I noticed I was ending up with a few scratched jump rings that required extra cleanup time before the chain could be polished. So I started looking into what I was doing wrong.

Making jump rings and weaving them into chainmaille designs involves a lot of opening and closing of the rings. I typically use two square jaw pliers to do this, one for each hand. The jaws of my pliers were pretty much scratch free because on a new tool I typically relieve any sharp edges, sand away any tool marks on working surfaces and give those areas a quick polish.



Pliers-2

That helped but was not the whole problem. While making chain, rings would sometimes slip out of the pliers or slide within the jaws as I was trying to twist them open or closed. I noticed the jaws close at an angle, and gave me the idea of forming a groove at the end of the jaw that would grasp the ring gently without scratching it. Not only have these pliers worked well for chainmaille, but I've found several other problem jobs that this modification solves very nicely.



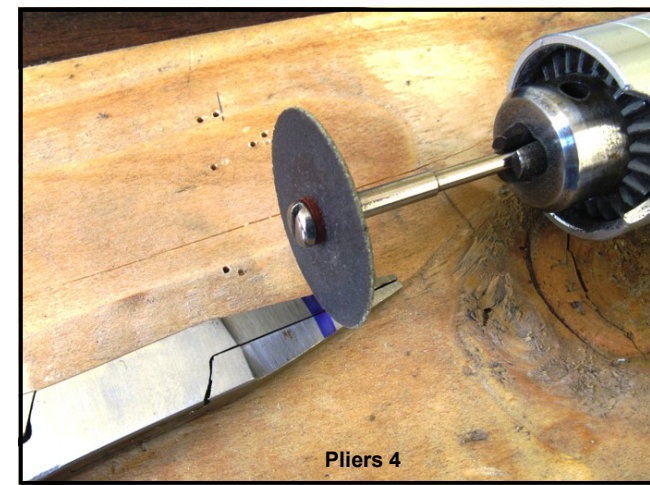
Pliers-3

To make up what I needed, I bought two inexpensive sets of square jaw pliers. My preference is for jaws that are about 3.5 - 4mm wide. This provides a good fit for the jump rings I use. You need to have enough metal at the tip of the jaws to be able to cut a groove that is deep enough. If your plier tips are too thin, you'll have to cut them back. Locate and mark the position on the jaw where the thickness is about 1.6 - 2mm.



Pliers-4

Cut the tips off with a cutoff wheel or grind them off with a bench grinder. If using a cutoff wheel, be sure to brace and hold both the workpiece and the rotating handpiece securely. If either moves, you will break the abrasive disk. And remember when cutting any metal with a motorized tool, be sure to use good eye protection. A little piece of debris in your eye makes for a bad day.



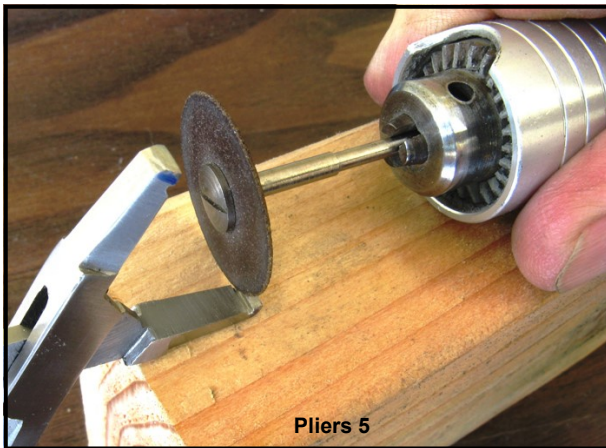
Continued on next page

Next Meeting, Wednesday March 14th, 7:00 PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Pliers-5

Cut the tips off with a cutoff wheel or grind them off with a bench grinder. If using a cutoff wheel, be sure to brace and hold both the workpiece and the rotating handpiece securely. If either moves, you will break the abrasive disk. And remember when cutting any metal with a motorized tool, be sure to use good eye protection. A little piece of debris in your eye makes for a bad day.



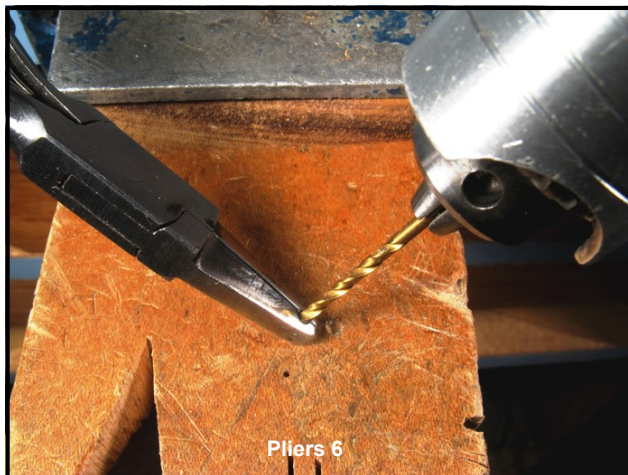
Pliers-6

Now, to make the grooves round so they grasp the wire without distorting it, I close the jaws and run a drill through the opening formed by the two rough grooves. I start with a small drill and followed up with a drill just slightly smaller than the wire size I want to grip. In my case that was #1- gauge wire, so I chose a #53 drill.

Finally, the shape of the grooves needs to be refined. I used a coarse, knife-edge, silicone polishing wheel on the flexshaft to polish off all marks left by the drill and to round off the outer edges of the groove.

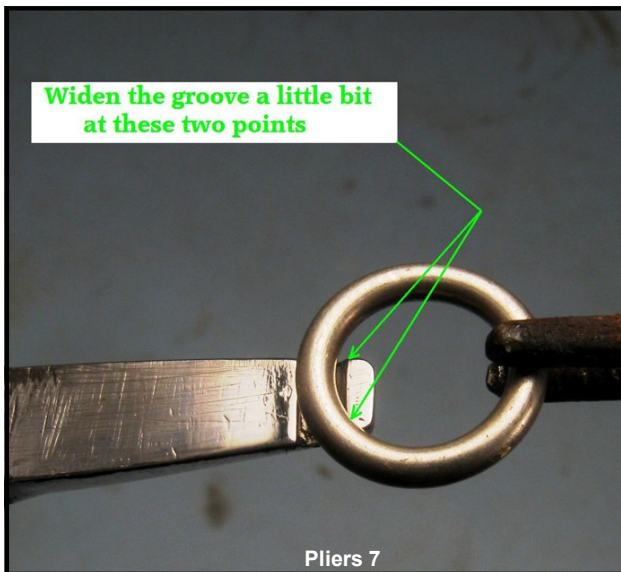
Want Your Photos?

Club members who would like jpeg images of themselves or images from any issue of *Rock Talk* can contact me and I will email them to you. Mike Stone, n1ve@amsat.org



Pliers-7

Test for proper fit by laying a jump ring into each groove. In particular, inspect the way the edges of the groove contact the inside of the ring. You may need to widen the groove at this point to avoid the pliers leaving a nick. Do a final polish so the jaws will not scratches as they grip a ring. I used a medium grit, knife-edge, silicone polishing wheel but a sewn buff with tripoli or Zam would also work well.

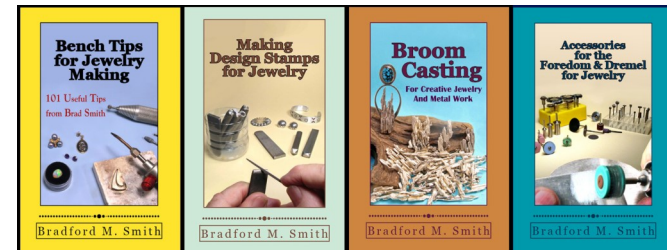


Managing Production

Many readers of these *Bench Tips* sell their jewelry at shows, in galleries, or online. They are sole proprietors and constantly under pressure to design new pieces and make enough product to keep up with demand. So their options are few when a large order comes in. They can burn the midnight oil themselves, or they can be smart and get some temporary help. But you need good help, and you often need it fast.

Jewelry assemblers are skilled, trustworthy, and reliable craftsmen who make it their business to help others handle overloads and meet deadlines. Flexible arrangements are possible, working by the job, by the hour, or by the piece. Each has a different mix of skills, from fabrication to enameling, casting, stone-setting, lapidary, and others.

Assemblers are known to the trade, so you may have to ask around to find some references. But some assemblers advertise on the Net. For instance, a good friend of mine, Janice Metz <JenFT4@aol.com>, has been working with designers and fabricators in the West Los Angeles area since 1997. She specializes in silversmithing, wire-wrapping, beading, and stringing.



Learn New Jewelry Skills With Brad's How-To-Do-It Books

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

For Sale Items

Club members can post appropriate club-related type **for sale** items in the *Rock Talk* free of charge. Contact your editors by the 25th of the month to have your items posted in the next issue.

Mike Stone

n1ve@amsat.org

Next Meeting, Wednesday March 14th, 7:00 PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Membership Form

2018

Complete this form and bring it with you to the Withlacoochee Rockhound meeting.
Attach your membership dues to this form.

Annual Dues: \$15.00 for an individual member or \$25.00 for a family

Please Print Clearly

Primary Member

Last name _____

First Name _____

Renewing members check here if no change in information below.

Additional family members:

Last name _____

First Name _____

Check if under 18

Last name _____

First Name _____

Check if under 18

Last name _____

First Name _____

Check if under 18

Last name _____

First Name _____

Check if under 18

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Give this completed form along with your check for dues made out to "Withlacoochee Rockhounds" to club secretary Janet Wheeler at the club meeting. Or mail the form and your check to Withlacoochee Rockhounds, PO Box 5634, Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

Rock Talk

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Our monthly club meeting is held at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Club, 3357 Susan Dr., Spring Hill, FL 34606, on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM



www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Your Business Card Size Ad in Rock Talk

The cost to advertise your businesses in *Rock Talk* is \$10.00 per month. . Contact Mike Stone to set up an ad in both the club newsletter and our website. It will benefit both your business and our club.

Your Business Card could be here

Withlacoochee Rockhounds
PO Box 5634
Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Purpose

We are a non-profit organization whose purpose is to foster interest and promote knowledge of minerals, gems, fossils, lapidary arts, and earth sciences, through regular meetings, informative programs, workshops, and field trips. PLUS our annual gem and mineral and jewelry show. Membership is open to anyone sharing such interests.

Dues

Dues are \$25.00 annually for a family and \$15.00 annually for a single member

Club Meeting Location and Time

Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center, 3357 Susan Drive in Spring Hill. The meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM.

2018 Club Officers

President.....	Judith Birx.....	352-587-1702.....	judithbirx@hotmail.com
Vice President.....	Kelly Johnson.....	352-688-9399.....	KellyMineralsFossils@aol.com
Secretary.....	Melodye Steverson.....	352-683-9496.....	melodye@designsbymelodye.com
Treasurer.....	Janet Wheeler.....	727-938-3644.....	ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com
Rock Talk Editors.....	Mike Stone / Peggy Burns.....	603-524-0468.....	n1ve@amsat.org
Club Web Master.....	Mike Stone.....	603-524-0468.....	n1ve@amsat.org
Mailing Reporter.....	Janet Wheeler.....	727-938-3644.....	ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com
Gem Bag Coordinator.....	Gloria DuPont.....	352-848-5199.....	ddupont@tampabay.rr.com

Board of Directors

Rovie Alford (2018)
Ralph Barber (past president)
Judith Birx (president)
Linda Spaulding (2020)

Melodye Steverson (secretary)
Dorwin Skinner (2020)
Mike Stone (2019)
Janet Wheeler (treasurer)