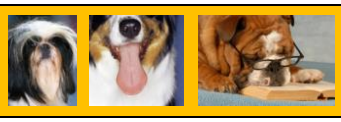
The official bulletin of the Dothan Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.

Rockhounds Herald

920 Yorktown Road, Dothan, AL 36301-4372

www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

August 2014



Words from…

The President

Well, we've finally made it to the Dog Days of summer. Hot enough for you? Ordinarily, this time of year I'd quip that all the kids will soon be headed back to school, but I think this year school started early. Too bad for all the little rockhounds, but the mom's and dad's may see it differently.

We've got one more social coming up on the 23rd. For all who missed it, we had a great time at last month's social and there were some choice pieces that changed hands during the Member's Auction. The same will no doubt be true of the upcoming gathering, though the focus will be somewhat different. Our move to the Farm Center for the annual show has upped our expenses, so the proceeds from this month's auction will go to benefit the club treasury in the hopes of defraying some of the costs associated with putting on the quality event our vendors and customers have come to expect of us. So donate your excess items. It's for a good cause.

We all know that Joan Blackwell is away on business for the next few months, but she hasn't completely left rockhounding behind. She recently visited the Burritt Mansion in Huntsville where she saw a great mineral and gem display put together by a member of the local rock group. Part of the exhibit involved oval granite slabs (waste material from holes cut in sink countertops). The slabs had arrows and labels identifying the individual minerals. That gave her the idea for this issue's Summer Project. See page 2 for a suggestion on "rockhounding in the city".

Until the 23rd. Jeff

Announcements

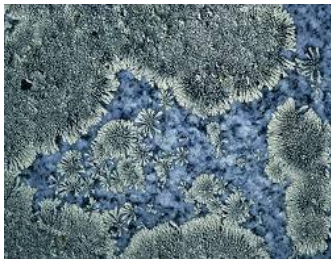
August Social – the final summer social is scheduled for Saturday, August 23rd and will feature a full-blown fund raising auction for the club treasury. If you have some material you'd like to get out of your way or you'd just like to do a good thing for the club, please bring it to the social. As usual, we'll meet at the Fellowship Hall at noon and eat at 1:00 PM. So, in addition to your extra rocks and such, bring your favorite dish to share

Upcoming Shows

September 5 – 7	**Forsyth Gem and Mineral Club**	**Winston-Salem, NC**
September 19 – 21	**Jacksonville Gem and Mineral Society**	**Jacksonville, FL**

Source: www.amfed.org/sfms/club-shows-789.html

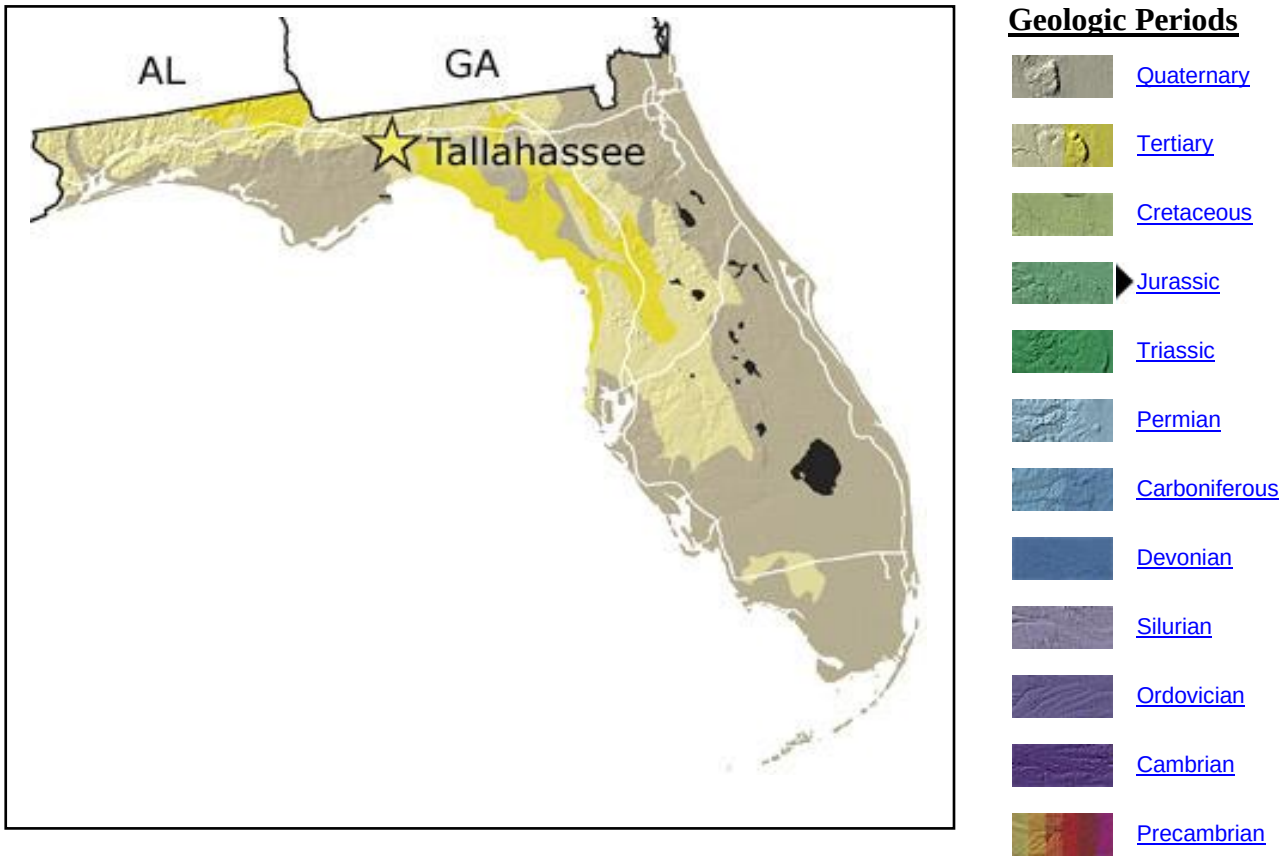
Summer Project # 2 – Urban Field Trip



Can you identify these minerals and gems?

Rockhounds, "Dog Days" got you down? Frustrated that it is too hot for a field trip to the quarry? Here's a way to get your "rock fix" without having to leave town…visit your kitchen and bathroom countertop store. Make a game of it. See how many individual minerals you can identify in the slabs and tiles. Granite is composed of several. Then have a nice lunch. All without breaking a sweat. ☺

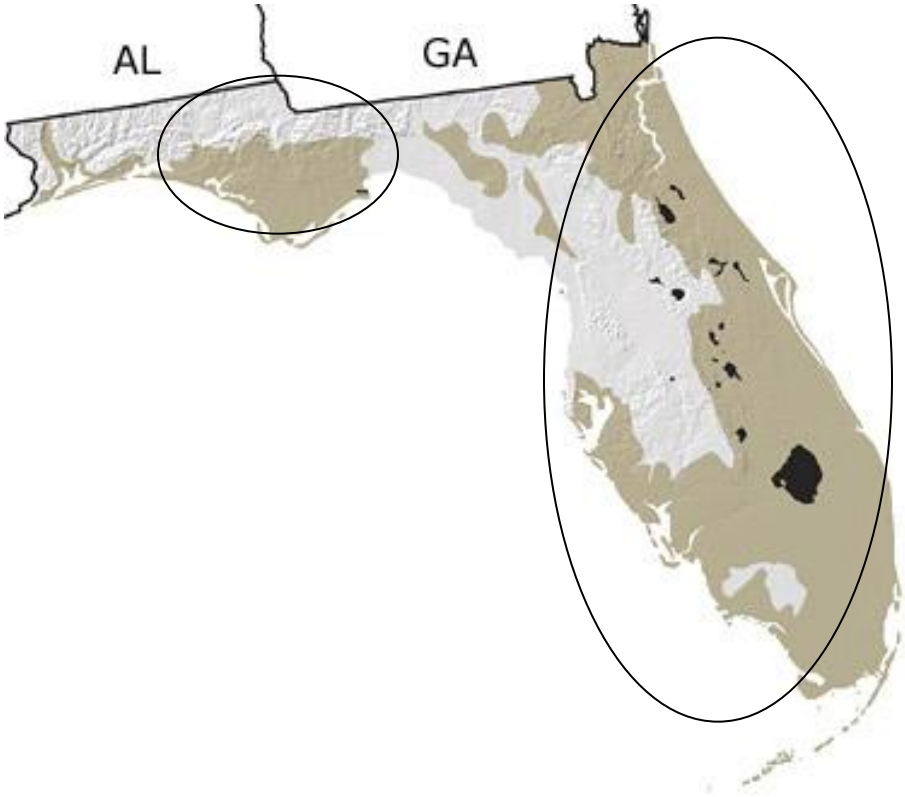
Florida – Paleontology and Geology Overview



The Precambrian, Paleozoic, and Mesozoic: There are no surface rocks exposed in Florida for the Precambrian through the Mesozoic, although some subsurface rocks do exist and provide us information about Florida's early history. Prior to the Late Paleozoic, Florida was not attached to our continent. Some subsurface Jurassic rocks indicate that the state was originally part of the ancient southern hemisphere continent of Gondwana. During the Permian, Gondwana collided with what is now North America to form the supercontinent of Pangea. When plate movement tore Pangea apart during the Mesozoic, the crust beneath what is now Florida was left behind as part of the North American continent.

The Cenozoic: Cenozoic rocks are well represented in Florida. During the Tertiary, most of the state was covered by a shallow, tropical sea. Gastropods, clams, echinoderms, and other marine animals flourished in great abundance in the warm waters. Sea level fluctuated widely during the Quaternary as glaciers grew and melted in the far northern part of North America. Vast savannas formed during times of lower sea level, and mammoths, mastodons, horses, bison, and other large mammals roamed the state.

Florida – Cenozoic Eras

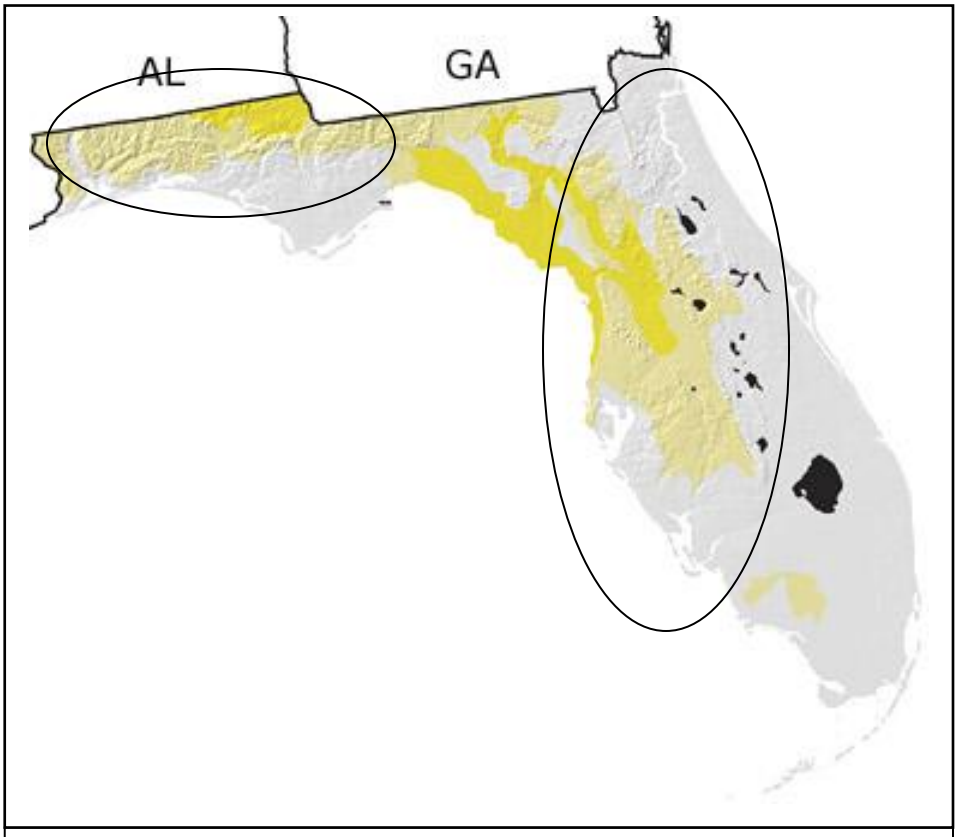


Quaternary

During the Quaternary, sea level fluctuated widely as glaciers grew and melted in the northern part of North America. Thick, alternating layers of marine shells and freshwater marls now exposed along the Florida peninsula provide evidence of the rise and fall of sea level over the state at this time.

These fluctuations, coupled with Florida's low topography, caused major changes in the amount of exposed land area. As glaciers to the north grew larger, sea level dropped up to 125 meters below present level, and Florida's shoreline expanded nearly 150 kilometers to the west. Vast savannas formed and were populated by large animals, such as mammoths, mastodons, horses, and bison.

Today, fossils of some of these mammals are found in sediments on the sea floor in the Gulf of Mexico. During warmer interglacial times, sea level rose up to 45 meters above present sea level. Most of the state's modern topography (e.g. rivers, lakes, barrier islands) formed during this time.



Tertiary

During the Early Tertiary, Florida was submerged under a shallow sea where limy sediment accumulated on the sea floor.

Later in the period, sands, silts, and clays from the eroding Appalachian Mountains filled a deep-water area (the Gulf Trough) that existed across a portion of what is now Florida's panhandle. This deposition produced an emergent landmass that was rapidly invaded by terrestrial plants and animals.

Sea level fluctuations continued in the Late Tertiary, and two of the world's most species-rich deposits, the Miocene Chipola Formation in the panhandle and the Pliocene Pinecrest beds of southern Florida, formed. Each unit contains a molluscan fauna with a diversity of over 1,000 species.

Florida – Mesozoic Eras

Cretaceous

There are no Cretaceous rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but fossiliferous rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Jurassic

There are no Jurassic rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but fossiliferous rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Triassic

There are no Triassic rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Florida – Paleozoic and Precambrian Eras

Permian

There are no Permian rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but fossiliferous rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Carboniferous

There are no Carboniferous rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but fossiliferous rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Devonian

There are no Devonian rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but fossiliferous rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Silurian

There are no Silurian rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but fossiliferous rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Ordovician

There are no Ordovician rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but fossiliferous rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Cambrian

There are no Cambrian rocks exposed at the surface in Florida, but rocks of this age do occur in the subsurface.

Precambrian

There are no Precambrian rocks exposed at the surface in this state.

Source: Photos and information courtesy of The Paleontology Portal (www.paleoportal.org).

Who What Where When Why How

August Birthdays

AUG 2 Christian Holderith
AUG 11 Wanda Moore
AUG 14 Arnie Lambert
AUG 23 Barbara Meredith

Random Fossil Facts

Fossil fuel does not come from dinosaurs, as many people believe. Rather, it comes from the fossilized remains of tiny organisms called diatoms.

Fossilized diatoms are also used as abrasives and, in fact many of our toothpaste formulas use them to make the paste abrasive enough to clean our teeth.

Source: http://classroom.synonym.com/10-fossils-2713.html

Meeting Information

Time: 2:00 PM
Date: Fourth Sunday of each month (except June, July and August)
Place: Fellowship Hall – Tabernacle United Methodist Church
4205 S. Brannon Stand Road
Dothan, AL

Website: www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

Objectives

To stimulate interest in lapidary, earth science and, when necessary, other related fields.

To sponsor an educational program within the membership to increase the knowledge of its members in the properties, identifications and evaluations of rocks, minerals, fossils and other related subjects.

To cooperate and aid in the solution of its members' problems encountered in the Club's objectives.

To cooperate with other mineralogical and geological clubs and societies.

To arrange and conduct field trips to facilitate the collection of minerals.

To provide opportunity for exchange and exhibition of specimens and materials.

To conduct its affairs without profit and to refrain from using its assets for pecuniary benefit of any individual or group.

Classified Ads

Looking for an item to round out your rock collection?

Got a specimen, tool or handicraft for sale or trade?

Submit the pertinent details to me by the 10th of each month and your inclinations will be made known to the membership in the next bulletin.

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28 Lakeview Trail, Apt. C
Daleville, AL 36322
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Annual Dues

Single $15
Family $20

Officers

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Vice President – Anne Trice
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334-806-5626

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Show Chair – Jeff DeRoche
334-673-3554

Field Trips Chair – Bruce Fizzell
334-577-4353

Hospitality Chair – JoAn Lambert
334-792-7116

Club Hostess – Laural Meints
334-723-8019

Club Liaison – Garry Shirah
334-671-4192

Refreshments

AUG 23 – Potluck Social

ROCKHOUNDS HERALD
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Where you might hear…

The Florida State Fossil is:

Agatized Coral (state stone)

Florida does not have an official state fossil (approval of the echinoid *Eupatagus antillarum* as the state fossil is pending), but its state stone is a fossilized coral (*Montastrea* sp. is pictured) that lived in the shallow seas covering the area during the upper Oligocene to lower Miocene (23-26 million years ago). Over time, the calcium carbonate of the coral skeleton has been replaced with agate.

Source: Photos and information courtesy of The Paleontology Portal (www.paleoportal.org).

Member of
Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies