

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

# ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

920 Yorktown Road, Dothan, AL 36301-4372

[www.wiregrassrockhounds.com](http://www.wiregrassrockhounds.com)

**March 2014**



## Happy First Day of Spring



### Words from...

#### The President

Well, we're just days away from our 7<sup>th</sup> annual gem and mineral show! I look forward to seeing everyone at the **meeting on Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>**. There are still lots of details left to iron out, so we'll need folks who are ready to pitch in and help.

Thanks to all who made it to the February meeting. I believe the group got a lot out of the live program presented by Arnie, and from all indications Potluck Refreshments were also an unqualified success. We'll talk about it at the meeting, but I believe we'll be continuing both in the future.

In the news recently was a story about an ancient zircon crystal found near Perth, Australia in 2001 that scientists claim is 4.4 billion years old, and the "oldest slice of earth we know". Check out the story at: [http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/24/world/oldest-earth-fragment/index.html?hpt=hp\\_t2](http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/24/world/oldest-earth-fragment/index.html?hpt=hp_t2). That would be quite an exciting find on one of our digs, huh?

See you at the meeting. Jeff

### Announcements

**Basic Beading Class** – Just a last minute reminder that Diane Rodenhizer is conducting a basic beading class at Anne Trice's backyard workshop on Sunday, March 16 at 1:00 PM. Check the club's website for the address and a list of needed supplies. You can reach Diane at 334-447-3610.

**March Meeting Program** – Grady Dunn will give a talk on opals for our meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Marble Festival** – The city of Sylacauga, Alabama will be hosting their sixth annual Marble Festival from April 8-19, 2014. The ten day event will feature an opportunity to observe a master Italian sculptor at work, along with 15-20 American sculptors. Tours to the three active quarries will be offered and there will be many other activities, including a scavenger hunt and several runs and road races. Visit [www.sylacaugchamber.com](http://www.sylacaugchamber.com) for more details.

### Upcoming Shows

March 28 – 30	Catawba Valley Gem & Mineral Club	Hickory, NC
April 4 – 6	Central Florida Mineral & Gem Society	Orlando, FL
<b>April 5 – 6</b>	<b>Dothan Gem &amp; Mineral Club</b>	<b>Dothan, AL</b>

Source: <http://www.the-vug.com/vug/vugshows.html>

# Meeting Minutes – February 2014 – by Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Jeff DeRoche at 2:15 PM. He welcomed the 32 people in attendance, including new members Terry & Nancy Miller and Betsy Hibbitts & Roger Boone. Jeff mentioned an upcoming premiere of a new show on the Discovery Channel, Friday, February 28. The show, *Game of Stones*, is about extreme gem hunting. Jeff also brought a copy of the new quarterly magazine, *American Rockhounds*. The cover features emeralds, and we all know how Jeff feels about emeralds. Jeff wished Happy Birthday to a long list of February-born club members.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** The club received the usual news letters from our fellow clubs.

**OLD BUSINESS:** The January minutes were approved without changes. Diane Rodenhizer presented the treasury report. Bruce Fizzell gave an update on talks he is having with a rock collection site near Andalusia and will soon have a date set for a dig there this spring before the weather gets too hot.

Arnie Lambert presented the show update. All 50 tables have been sold and Arnie gave members with tables a copy of the room layout. He stressed that a county license MUST be purchased by all vendors and on hand at the show. He offered to collect the money and purchase up all the licenses for club members planning to display at the show. Jeff is handling the sign modifications, but most of the old signs can't be modified so 21 new signs will have to be ordered.

**NEW BUSINESS:** The Rockwell's are expecting their first baby. Congratulations! Loral Meints donated 6 DVDs on wire wrapping to the club library and is in the process of making copies of more topics which she will later donate. She also ordered a book about collecting rocks along Georgia roadways and will bring it to the next meeting.

A need for volunteers to do grab bags was mentioned. Anne Trice & the Merino family agreed to prepare them. Donation of items should be dropped off at Arnie's by the end of February. The Merino kids designed and brought in a couple of new club logos for us to consider.

Discussions arose about advertising and Ginger Merino asked if WTVY had been contacted. Arnie asked whether the other rock clubs have been sent notices about the show. A request went out for donations for the silent auction. JoAn Lambert is in charge of getting businesses to donate. Arnie reminded the group we need to select a new chair for the show. Last year was supposed to have been his last.

Anne Trice requested that folks sign up to teach a class for club members. Before the meeting was over, Diane had volunteered to teach a basic beading class at Anne's backyard workshop on Sunday, March 16 at 1:00 PM. Details of needed materials will be posted on the website and/or emailed.

JoAn mentioned there is an error in the current club by-laws. Though it states that the club year runs from September 1 to August 31, that rule was verbally amended many years ago and the club year now runs from January 1 to December 31.

Chris Wisham asked about the contest for awarding a scholarship for a class at the William Holland School of Lapidary Arts in Georgia. Jeff explained that the executive council voted to shelve the project due to lack of interest and the amount of recordkeeping involved, but offered to reopen discussion.

**SHOW & TELL:** JoAn displayed two beautiful bracelets she made using aurum. Ben Ferguson brought in a piece of petrified coral from his Withlacoochee River collection. L.J. Ward displayed several points he received as gifts from folks in Tampa, FL who had collected the raw material from his backyard rock pile. He also showed a collection of poop-turned-to-marcasite that he dug up 6-8 years ago in west Alabama.

Joe Cody brought 2 cases of arrowheads he collected. One case ranged from paleo to early archaic & the other ranged from middle- to late archaic. New member, Betsy Hibbitts, brought in opalized petrified wood she collected while living in Yucca, Arizona. She asked for help identifying a symbol carved on it. She also displayed a turquoise necklace and a piece of chalcopyrite she found in a gold mine in Nevada.

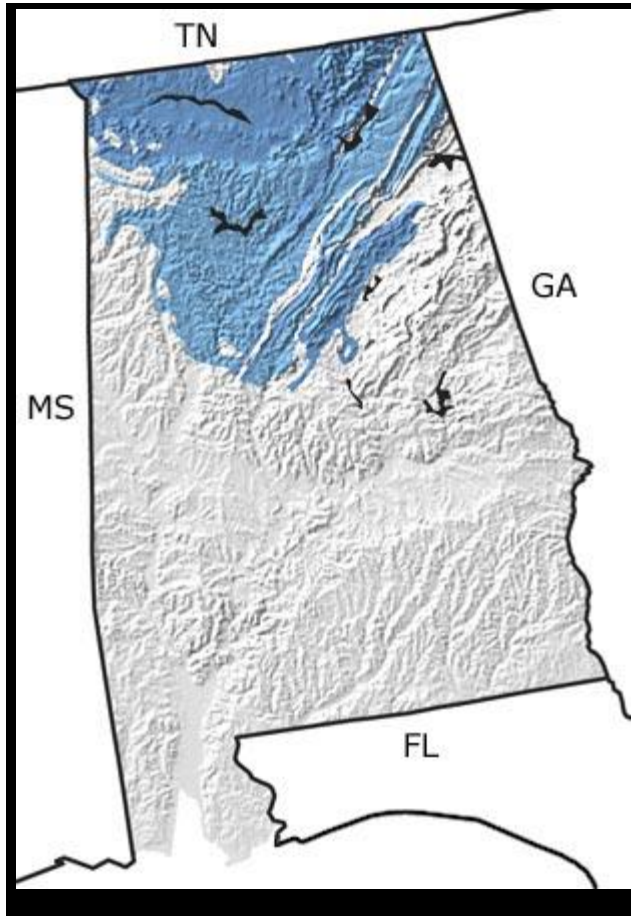
**PROGRAM:** The club broke for refreshments and then regrouped for a presentation by Arnie. Potluck Refreshments was a success with a good showing of tasty treats to share. Rather than the promised slides of magnified images of rocks in his collection, Arnie presented the show he often does for schools which included dimming the lights to show the specimens that glow under short- and long-wave lights. There was also a huge coprolite among the collection and a small quartz cluster called a Japan-Law twin which is where two crystals of quartz have formed together with axes oriented at almost 84 degrees and 33 minutes to each other. While quartz crystals are common around the world, these kinds of quartz crystal twins are not! The meeting was adjourned after the presentation.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Leduc with notes provided by Joan Blackwell

## Alabama – Paleozoic and Precambrian Eras

The Permian in Alabama, US – (245 to 286 million years ago)

The Carboniferous in Alabama, US – (286 to 360 million years ago)



### Permian Period

There are no Permian rocks preserved in Alabama. This is probably due to the fact that the Alabama landscape was uplifted above sea level and exposed to erosion.



### Carboniferous Period

During the Early Carboniferous (Mississippian), seas teeming with crinoids and brachiopods covered most of the state.

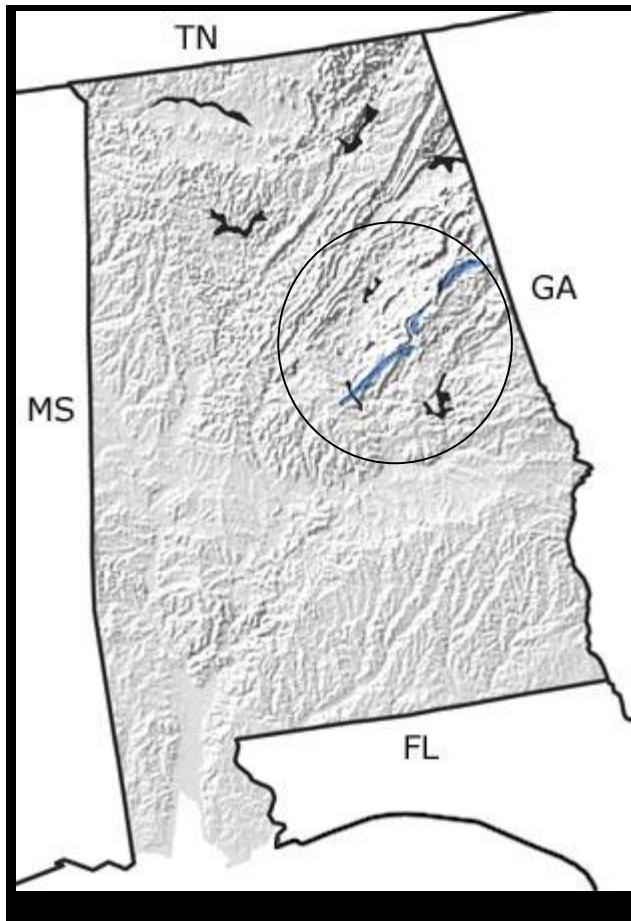
Tectonic activity in the Late Carboniferous (Pennsylvanian) caused Gondwana to collide with the southern edge of Laurentia, forming the supercontinent of Pangea.

This resulted in a mountain-building event (Alleghenian Orogeny) and the formation of the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

Subsequent erosion of these mountains produced vast amounts of sediments that were swept into the sea, creating broad, coastal plains where forests of primitive trees and fern-like plants thrived.

These forests are preserved today as the many coal seams and rocks rich with Coal Age fossils that are found throughout much of northern Alabama.

## The Devonian in Alabama, US – (360 to 410 million years ago)



### Devonian Period

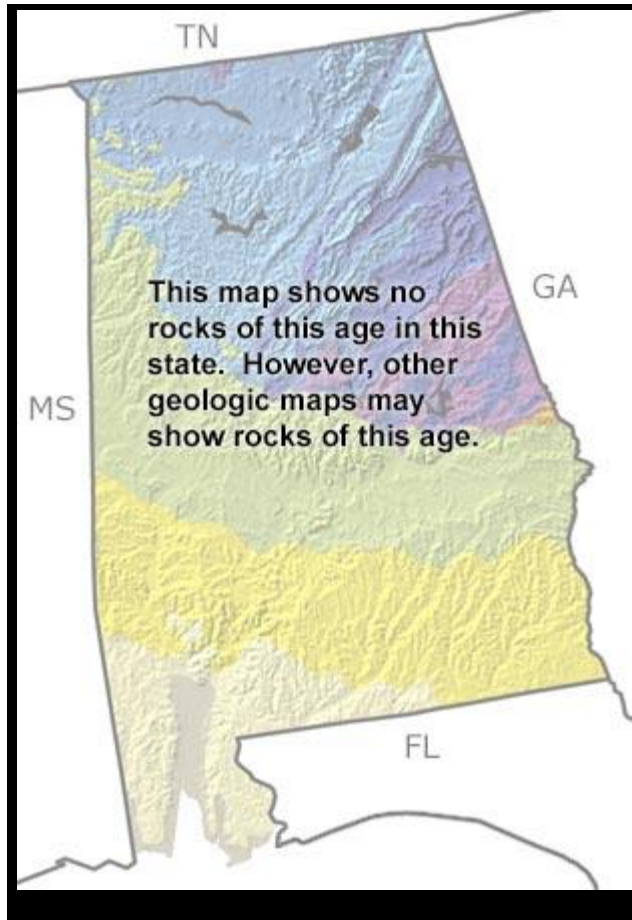
The Devonian is not well represented in Alabama rocks, as at least some of the state was above sea level and subject to erosion.

However, a stretch of Devonian rocks called the Frog Mountain Sandstone occurs in eastern Alabama. Formed nearshore in a marine environment, these rocks are reported to contain the first fragmentary traces of land plants in Alabama.

Dark-colored marine rocks in northern Alabama (known as the Chattanooga Shale) show that the sea covering most of the state in the Late Devonian contained large areas of deeper, oxygen-poor water.

Few organisms could tolerate these conditions. Fossils from these rocks are limited primarily to plant fragments and the remains of animals that swam above the deep, oxygen-starved waters.

## The Silurian in Alabama, US – (410 to 440 million years ago)



### Silurian Period

Most of Alabama lay beneath the sea throughout much of the Silurian, as evidenced by fossils of brachiopods, trilobites, crinoids, and other marine creatures.

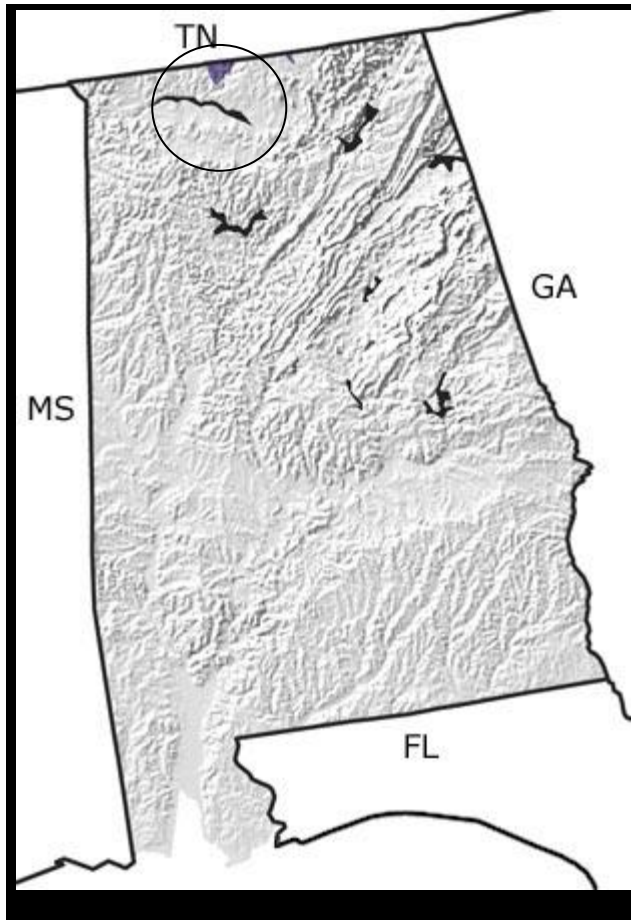
Erosion of the Taconic Mountains to the east deposited sediments in these shallow seas.

One particular type of sediment produced layers of hematite iron ore, which has played an important role in Alabama's industrial history.

Although not shown on this map, these hematite layers are exposed in the Valley and Ridge Province near Birmingham and Gadsden in central Alabama.

Their easy accessibility led to the state's once thriving iron and steel industries.

## The Ordovician in Alabama, US – (440 to 500 million years ago)



### Ordovician Period

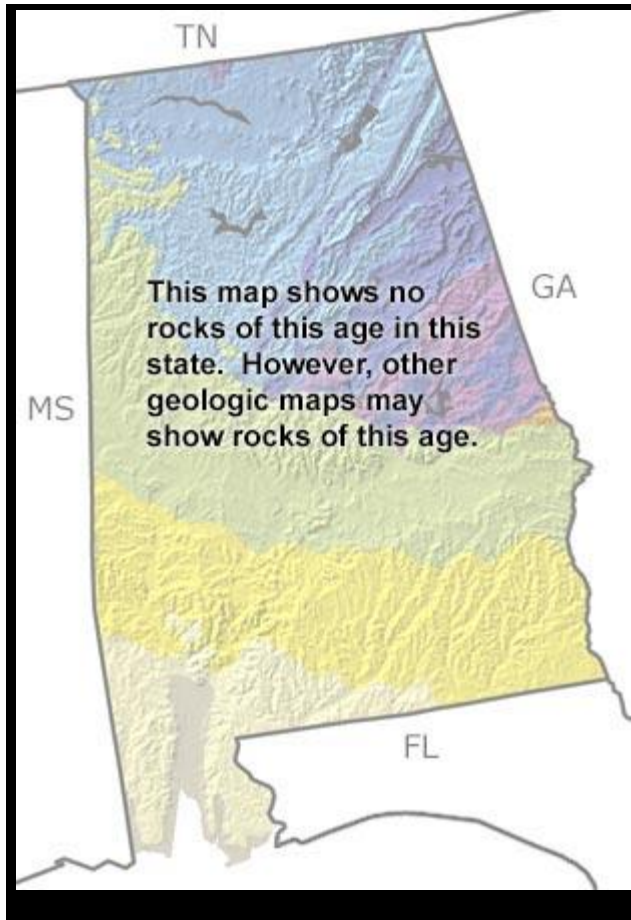
During the Ordovician, most of the land that would become Alabama lay beneath a warm, tropical sea teeming with brachiopods, clams, trilobites, and other marine life. Rocks formed from sediments deposited on this sea floor are now exposed along the Tennessee border in the north-central part of the state.

A mountain-building event (Taconic Orogeny) occurred in the middle Ordovician. Layers of ash from associated volcanic activity and sediments eroding off the rising mountains were periodically deposited into the sea. Melting caused by the subduction of the crust during this orogeny produced massive plutons of granite-type rock.

Although not shown on this map, these granitic rocks are now exposed at the surface across Alabama's Piedmont Province in the east-central part of the state.



## The Cambrian in Alabama, US – (500 to 544 million years ago)

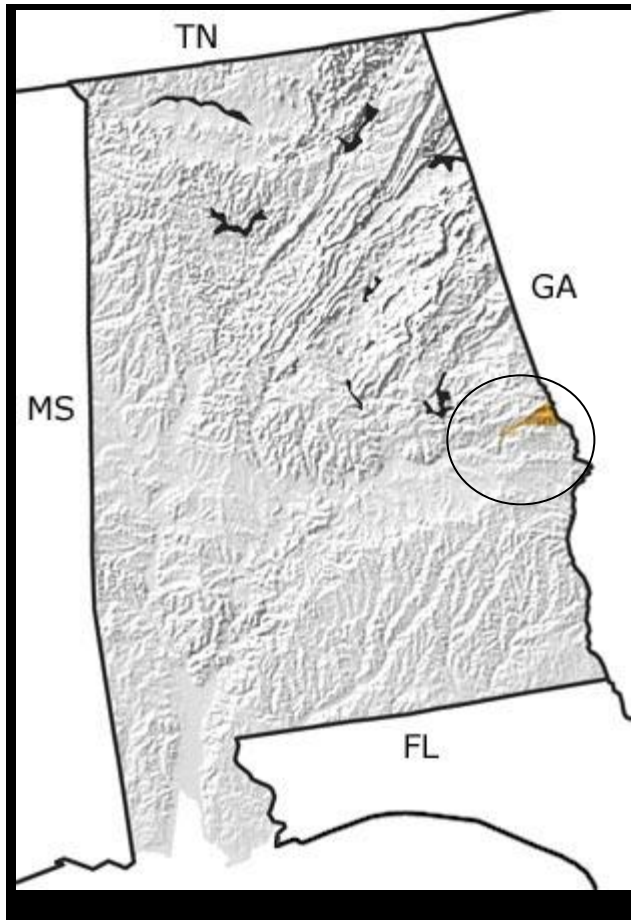


### Cambrian Period

During the Cambrian, the land that is now Alabama lay south of the Earth's equator along the edge of the Iapetus Ocean. Rising sea levels during the Late Cambrian produced a thick sequence of sedimentary rocks that contain a smattering of marine life, including fossils of trilobites and brachiopods.

Although not shown on this map, rocks formed from these marine sediments can be found across parts of northern Alabama

## The Precambrian in Alabama, US – (544 to 4,500 million years ago)



### Precambrian Period

Little is known about Alabama's Precambrian history because the few rocks that date to this time in the state have been highly altered through metamorphism.

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



# Club Meeting – February 2014

Photos by Bruce



Lots of folks and fun at the February meeting. Four new members, too. Woo hoo!!!





# Club Meeting – February 2014

Photos by Bruce



AGATIZED CORAL w/ Druse Quartz  
Cavity & Siliceous type Formation  
GEORGIA



AMETHYST QUARTZ  
BRAZIL



MALACHITE  
AFRICA



NATIVE COPPER  
MICHIGAN



ENHYDROID  
(AGATE)  
BRAZIL

DRUSE COVERED FOSSIL SHELLS  
in CHERT  
DOTHAN, ALABAMA



CITRINE  
BRAZIL

ROSE  
QUARTZ  
AFRICA



JERICO WALL



FLUORITE  
California



PYRITE INCLUSIONS  
in AGATE  
ALABAMA



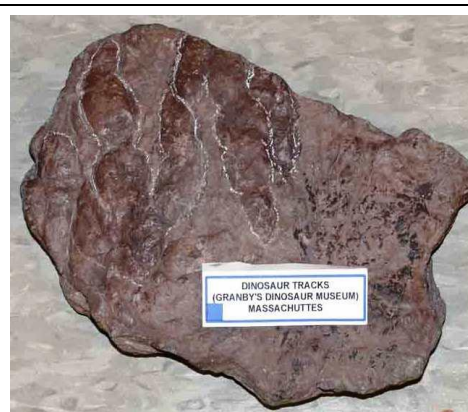
DEAD SEA



BERLIN WALL  
GERMANY



ALABAMA SEAM AGATE  
w/ PYRITE INCLUSIONS  
CLARK CO., ALABAMA



DINOSAUR TRACKS  
(GRANBY'S DINOSAUR MUSEUM)  
MASSACHUSETTS



HERMANN DIAMOND  
HERMANN, NEW YORK



Coal from Titanic

Arnie Lambert regaled us with tales about a few choice pieces in his enormous rock collection.



## The Paleozoic Era

Find the words in the grid. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions.

S	D	I	R	E	T	P	Y	R	U	E	M	Y	C	K	V	R
Z	J	D	L	T	M	X	J	P	L	K	Q	A	W	H	L	V
M	K	E	K	T	L	S	C	V	J	Y	R	J	M	P	S	W
K	D	V	X	T	C	P	I	T	L	B	J	F	F	D	Y	S
B	R	O	M	R	I	L	R	L	O	R	N	R	I	N	C	A
Z	P	N	K	K	O	F	S	N	U	A	X	O	L	J	P	R
H	K	I	N	D	Z	K	I	E	I	R	N	M	X	P	C	E
L	N	A	D	N	O	F	X	R	T	I	I	Y	C	L	T	C
M	C	N	M	L	E	F	B	K	R	I	J	A	R	G	M	O
M	P	X	X	R	L	M	R	C	V	X	B	Z	N	D	T	H
T	K	M	O	M	A	Z	T	R	W	C	Q	O	Z	P	M	T
N	Z	U	K	C	P	Y	L	W	H	H	T	M	L	T	F	R
J	S	H	B	R	A	C	H	I	O	P	O	D	S	I	V	O
O	R	D	O	V	I	C	I	A	N	G	K	K	T	T	R	R
M	C	M	N	A	I	M	R	E	P	W	R	Q	P	W	T	T

**brachiopods**

**cambrian**

**carboniferous**

**crinoids**

**devonian**

**eurypterids**

**ordovician**

**orthoceras**

**paleozoic**

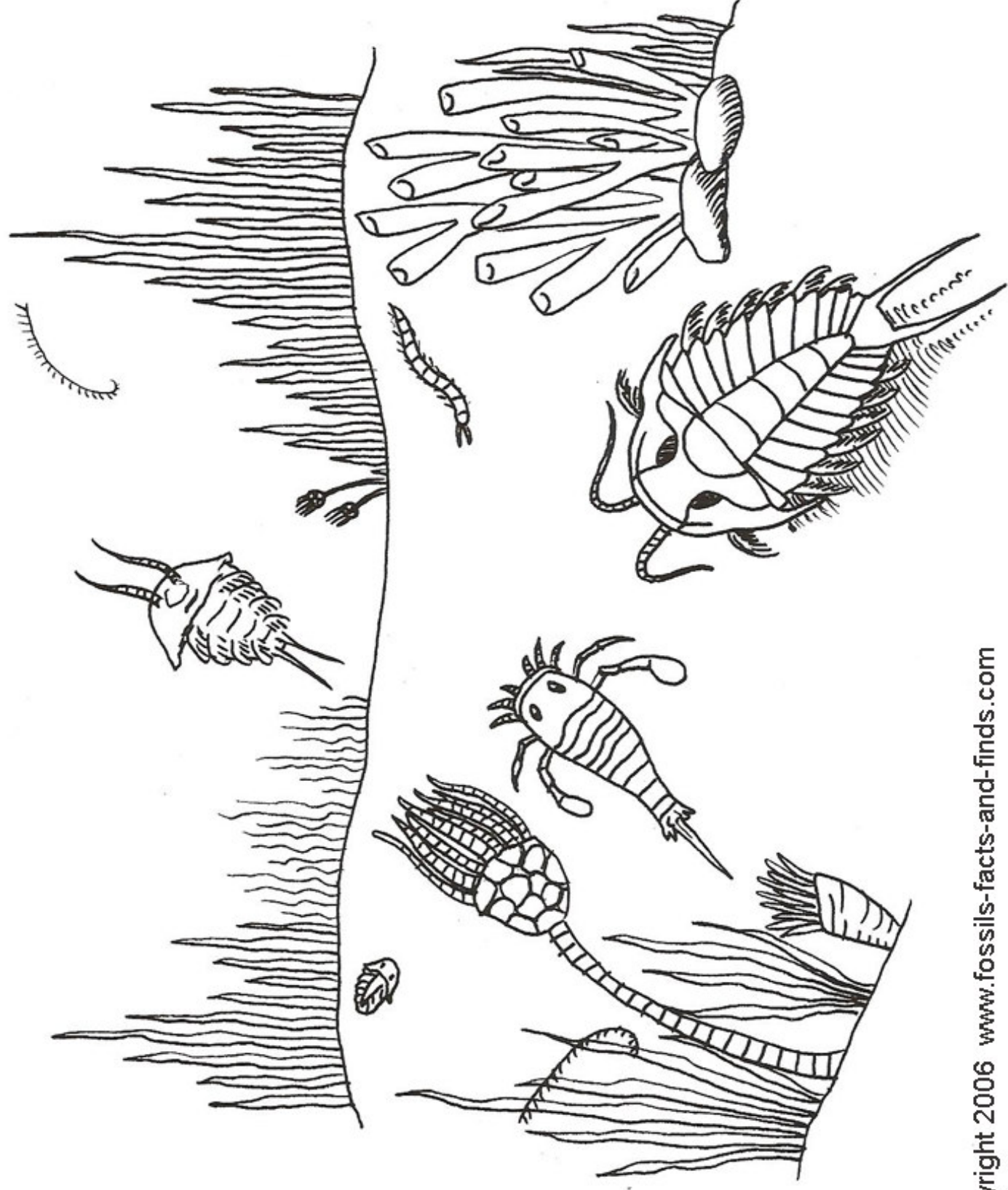
**permian**

**silurian**

**trilobites**



# The Paleozoic Sea



# Who What Where When Why How

## March Birthdays

**MAR 1** David Jones  
**MAR 7** Jeff DeRoche  
**MAR 7** Thomas Merino  
**MAR 8** Harold Newman  
**MAR 16** Ginger Merino  
**MAR 19** Grady Dunn  
**MAR 19** George White  
**MAR 19** Lisa Wisham  
**MAR 20** Kama Clay  
**MAR 23** JoAn Lambert  
**MAR ??** Ben Ferguson

## Random Fossil Facts

Plants and animals must be buried under certain specific conditions to become fossilized. A footprint of an animal can only be fossilized if the animal walked slowly over a moist, fine-grained, and cohesive sediment bed.

The Pennsylvanian coastal and swamp deposits of the Alabama Black Warrior Basin, (e.g., the Stephen C. Minken Paleozoic Footprint Site near Birmingham) host tens of thousands of amphibian tracks, the largest and most diverse assemblage of Mississippian and Pennsylvanian footprints in the world.

Sources: <http://lifestyle.iloveindia.com/lounge/fossils-facts-12587.html>  
[http://geology.teacherfriendlyguide.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=177&Itemid=199](http://geology.teacherfriendlyguide.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=177&Itemid=199)

## 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](http://www.wiregrassrockhounds.com)

## Officers

**President – Jeff DeRoche**  
334-673-3554

**Vice President – Anne Trice**  
334-718-4838

**Secretary – Pat LeDuc**  
334-806-5626

**Treasurer – Diane Rodenhizer**  
334-447-3610

**Bulletin Editor – Joan Blackwell**  
334-503-0308  
Tsavorite7@aol.com

**Webmaster – Pat LeDuc**  
334-806-5626

**Membership Chair – Diane Rodenhizer**  
334-447-3610

**Show Chair – Arnie Lambert**  
334-792-7116

**Field Trips Chair – Bruce Fizzell**  
334-577-4353

**Hospitality Chair – JoAn Lambert**  
334-792-7116

**Club Hostess – Loral Meints**  
334-723-2695

**Club Liaison – Garry Shirah**  
334-671-4192

## 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 10<sup>th</sup> of each month and your inclinations will be made known to the membership in the next bulletin.**

**N. J. Blackwell**  
 28 Lakeview Trail, Apt. C  
 Daleville, AL 36322  
 Phone: 334-503-0308  
 Email: Tsavorite7@aol.com

## Annual Dues

Single \$15  
 Family \$20

## Refreshments

**MAR 23 – Club Potluck**

# ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

Editor – N. J. Blackwell  
28 Lakeview Trail, Apt. C  
Daleville, AL 36322

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## Where you might hear...

Fossils found in the Southeast's Coastal Plain Region (3) may include:

**mollusks:**  
*clams, snails, cephalopods*

**corals:**  
*scleractinian*

**echinoderms:**  
*sand dollars, sea urchins*

**barnacles**

**shark teeth**

**other teeth and skeletal fragments**



Source:  
[http://geology.teacherfriendlyguide.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=178&Itemid=200](http://geology.teacherfriendlyguide.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=178&Itemid=200)

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**American Federation of Mineralogical Societies**