

ARCHAEOLOGY LECTURE SERIES

WINTER-SPRING 2016

Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center
1800 Weedon Drive NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33702

CENTRAL GULF COAST
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Sponsored by



Thursday, January 21, 2016, 7-8 PM

Traci Ardren, Ph.D., University of Miami

Results of Recent Archaeological Research at Upper Matecumbe Key—Evaluating Early Island Life

Excavations on Upper Matecumbe Key provide rich archaeological data on what life was like for the earliest inhabitants of the Florida Keys. Unique challenges of life on the island chain were addressed in novel ways by this culture of coastal fisherfolk. Dr. Ardren will discuss the similarities and differences between so-called Matecumbe inhabitants of the Keys, the better known Calusa of the west coast, and the contemporary people of the Everglades. Archaeological evidence is disappearing at a dangerous rate in the Keys due to development and climate change, but analysis of existing artifact collections as well as new excavation of preserved sites can provide extraordinary information about the earliest coastal inhabitants and their unique way of life.

Thursday, February 18, 2016, 7-8 PM

Kathryn Arthur, Ph.D., & John Arthur, Ph.D., University of South Florida

Discovering Bayira: The First Ancient African Genome from Southwestern Ethiopia

In 2012, an archaeological team funded by the National Science Foundation excavated Mota Cave in the Gamo Highlands of Southwestern Ethiopia and recovered a 4,500-year-old male human skeleton that has provided the first complete ancient human (*Homo sapiens*) genome sequenced from the African continent. We have named the skeleton, Bayira (by-*raa*) meaning “first born” in the Gamo language where Bayira was found. This discovery provides new insights into population interactions in the Southern Red Sea area and in Northeastern Africa and has given us a new perspective on prehistoric adaptations to life in the Ethiopian highlands.



Thursday, March 17, 2016, 7-8 PM

Jessica Miller, Ph.D. Candidate, University of South Florida

Middle Woodland Complexity and Culture Change in Northwest Florida from a Domestic Perspective

Throughout the Eastern U.S., the Middle Woodland was a period of increased cultural complexity. This complexity is best identified in the Apalachicola-lower Chattahoochee River region of northwest Florida through the combined presence of Swift Creek Complicated-Stamped ceramics and early Weedon Island ceramic types along with nonlocal trade items, burial mounds, and evidence of elaborate mortuary ritual. The Otis Hare site (8L1172) is a freshwater shell midden on the east bank of the Apalachicola River occupied for over one thousand years, with the most intensive occupation during the Middle Woodland period (A.D. 300-650). The site is used as a case study to characterize the Middle Woodland and examine culture change in the river valley from a domestic perspective.

Thursday, April 21, 2016, 7-8 PM

Michael Arbuthnot, M.S., SEARCH

Spring Surprise: Lessons Learned and Unexpected Results of the Chassahowitzka Headsprings - Archaeological Assessment and Monitoring Project

In 2013 SEARCH conducted underwater archaeological investigations and monitoring at the Chassahowitzka Headsprings in Citrus County. Although the initial underwater survey yielded a sparse artifact count, hundreds of rare objects were recovered during the monitoring phase, including a Suwannee projectile point, a bone fishhook, an intact Pasco Plain bowl, Spanish majolica fragments, hand-carved wooden paddles, a large wooden fin effigy and over 100 bottles dating from 1885 to present. The project is important not only for the cultural materials it produced, but for the lessons learned; the results of which will undoubtedly influence future underwater archaeology work in Florida springs.



These programs are free and open to the public. Register at least 24 hours prior by visiting www.pinellascountyextension.org, clicking on the “Online Class Registration” button, and then choosing “Weedon Island”. You may also phone 727-453-6500 to reserve your place.