



WMS/LSS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 36, No. 4 September/October 2025

A 501(c)3 Corporation and Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society

We meet at the North Port Public Library, 13800 Tamiami Trail at 6:30 PM in the Veranda Room (in the back, children's section).

Our speakers for September and October will be in-person. We will meet for dinner prior to the meeting at Alvaro's Family Restaurant (14512 Tamiami Trl, North Port, FL 34287) at 4:30 PM, prior to the meeting. For Zoom Access Go to:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8583871128?pwd=VFJmVkF4MjRWaHJ1dmpDMnZMYkRQUT09&omn=89878410991>

Meeting ID: 858 387 1128 Passcode: iBFa2B

RECOVERING HISTORY: SALVAGE EXCAVATIONS AT ELZUARDI'S POND HISTORIC DEPOSIT, TOPIC OF SEPTEMBER 9 MEETING BY MICHELLE CALHOUN

As mentioned in the May 2025 WMS/LSSAS newsletter earlier this year, a permitted, but unmonitored, boundary wall excavation took place along a public sidewalk in the Indian Beach neighborhood of Sarasota, exposing copious amounts of late 19th and early 20th century artifacts, and some which are even earlier. With owner permission, these were salvaged over the course of several visits to the site by Calhoun, local resident Elliot Stutzman, and WMS/LSSAS members Robert J. Dunay, Tim Costin, and Joe Carbone. Recovered were artifacts ranging between the Florida *Rancho* period and the 1930s.

Spanish fishermen from Cuba established fishing camps, or *ranchos*, along the southwest Gulf coast, starting in the late 1600s. By the late 1700s, fishing camps could be found up and down the coast. Spanish and Native Americans worked together at these camps to **(continued on page 2, Elzuardi)**



September speaker, Michelle Calhoun

DID PONCE DE LEON DISCOVER FLORIDA AND THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH?, TOPIC OF OCTOBER 14 MEETING BY TIM COSTIN

Juan Ponce de León, born in 1474, was a *conquistador* and Spanish explorer who traveled with Christopher Columbus' 1493 expedition. He became an official on Hispaniola (Cuba) and, during this time, crushed a Taino rebellion and received authorization to explore neighboring Puerto Rico in 1508. Gold was discovered and he established the first gold mines along the northern coast of Puerto Rico; with these mines producing gold for the next several decades through forced labor. Plantations were created across the country, also using forced labor. Ponce de León became Puerto Rico's first governor in 1509. A legal dispute with Diego Colón, the son of Columbus, led to his replacement by Colón as governor in 1511. Ponce de León then led and self-financed his first expedition to Florida, buoyed by the wealth he had gained from the mines and plantations, and later self-financed a second, fateful, trip.



October speaker, Tim Costin

This presentation will discuss all this, as well as why earlier discoverers did not claim Florida, what role the Catholic Church played in claiming new lands, the myth surrounding the "Fountain of Youth," and will speculate about what the outcome could have been for Florida had his attempts to establish a permanent colony for the Spanish crown been successful.

Tim Costin received his degree in Music Education from Northern Illinois University and was a school band director for several years before going to work as a computer programmer for Sears, working in Sears Tower. He recently retired from IBM and moved to Florida where he has developed a keen interest in studying and sharing Florida's history. He develops and presents his research as part of the continuing education program for adults at the IslandWalk Academy in Venice. Tim has been a member of WMS/LSSAS for 3 years and serves on the society's board. His other interests include playing pickleball and piano.

ELZUARDI (continued from page 1)

catch and cure the fish, and established communities and familial relationships, with close ties and regular travel between Florida and Cuba. During the Second Seminole War (1835 - 1842), the Army used the *ranchos*, which were frequently visited by Native Americans, as places to establish communications with those whom they were trying to remove to Oklahoma, including those of mixed ancestry at the *ranchos*.

During this period, Fort Armistead was established in the Indian Beach area, on the *rancho* of Manuel Olivella, but its exact location is still a mystery. Intriguingly, lead slag and Seminole War period buttons have been found nearby, on several different upland lots. A local resident informed Calhoun that the lot with the historic deposit is actually an artesian well which is the reason for the deposition. Newspaper articles from the early 1900s noted that the city garbage man was paid \$100 a month to drive his wagon around, collect trash, and deposit it in low-lying and/or marshy areas to fill them in. It does not appear to have worked in this case, as the pond (which can be seen on the 1883 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey map) still exists, having been sculpted into a backyard water feature as seen on the County property appraiser's website.

This presentation will discuss the discovery and salvage recovery at the site, the artifacts recovered, and describe the neighborhood during the periods of use and deposition of some of the different artifacts. This stretch of Indian Beach, north of Whitaker Bayou, has had a long and interesting history, from Native middens and mounds to Cuban fishermen, to pioneers and settlers, to modest winter retreats for the earliest snowbirds, and now to mansions for the wealthy interspersed with small homes passed down through several generations.

Michelle Calhoun is an archaeologist employed by Archaeological Consultants, Inc., of Sarasota. Her primary focus, until the discovery of this site and others in the Indian Beach neighborhood, was on the movement and utilization of lightning whelk by Archaic period Native Peoples. She is currently the President, co-editor of the newsletter, and Membership Secretary for WMS/LSSAS. Calhoun is also involved in the monitoring and study of the rare *Sacoila*

lanceolata var. *paludicola*, found at LSS. She has a BA in Anthropology from New College of Florida.

A table will be set up to view the artifacts, with one section dedicated to those patterned glass shards which still need to be identified (for anyone who would like to participate). Anyone who can successfully identify the manufacturer of one of these pieces will have their name added to the acknowledgements of the upcoming article for *The Florida Anthropologist*! Our November speaker is confirmed as Janet Lloyd and she has kindly agreed to come down a day early and help identify some of the artifacts prior to her presentation!

SOUTH FIELD POTTERY ASSEMBLAGE AT THE MILL COVE COMPLEX; MAY 2025 PRESENTATION BY VICTORIA HAYES

Victoria Hayes, University of Florida graduate student and recent graduate of University of North Florida (UNF), kindly agreed to drive down from Gainesville to give a presentation on her research at the Mill Cove Archaeological Complex, in Jacksonville.



Victoria Hayes receiving our world-famous tee-shirt from long-time member and former board member Robert J. Dunay

According to the UNF website dedicated to this site, this complex "*stands as the preeminent St. Johns II civic-ceremonial center in northeastern Florida...[and] consists of 1,000-year-old household refuse accumulations, special events and/or ritual middens, earthen causeways, and two sand burial mounds.*"

This complex has a long-distance connection to Cahokia, in Illinois, based on the iconography of some of the recovered copper artifacts, as well as to other sites throughout the Southeast. UNF noted that much of the published research on Mill Cove centers around either the site's two burial mounds (Shields and Grant) or Kinzey's Knoll, a special event midden. Since 1999, however, UNF has sampled 12 other areas, including South Field.

This presentation relayed the results of her UNF undergraduate honors thesis wherein stylistic and technological attributes were used to convert more than 1,200 potsherds from South Field into vessel lots. From these, orifice measurements and surface alterations served as proxies of vessel form and

function, respectively. There were several different variations of check stamping and some were burnished ware. Orifice measurements helped to show whether the vessel was used as an open platter or bowl for serving or group consumption. Those with more enclosed orifices were more likely to have been used as containers for transportation or storage, hence why burnished ware is more likely to have an enclosed orifice.

Her research shows that burnished ware was made to hold liquids, as these vessels are less porous. One type of uncommon burnished check stamped ware, known as fine ware (typified by complicated punctations and incisions), can be found in greater numbers at Mill Cove than at any other St. Johns II site in the area. A practical use of check stamping is to decrease the weight of the vessel, but it also serves to help determine the origin of the vessel, as certain stamps can be traced to specific regions and even to the paddles.

Ms. Hayes presented a paper the week before her visit with us at the May 2025 Annual Conference of the Florida Anthropological Society, held in Gainesville. Her paper was titled, "Gathering Oysters and Piling Shells: The Curious Shell Formations at Cedar Point North," which was very well received. She won one of two Student Paper Awards, which came with several books and gifts! Congratulations, Victoria! In congratulations for her award and on behalf of the WMS/LSSAS, former president Steve Koski asked her to pick out a book of her choice from the book store for her library.



Steve Koski presents Victoria Hayes with a book of her choice, "Mississippi Woman," edited by Rachel V. Briggs, Michaelyn S. Harle, and Lynne P. Sullivan, from the book store to congratulate her on her FAS Student Paper Award received on May 10 at the 2025 FAS Annual Conference.

For more information about our speaker and the Mill Cove Complex, click the links below..

<https://www.unf.edu/newsroom/2024/02/Anthropology-major-researches-local-Indigenous-history.html>

<https://sevenages.org/podcasts/floridas-moundbuilders-the-mill-cove-complex-saaj-74/>

BLOOMING ORCHIDS OF LITTLE SALT SPRING

Little Salt Spring (LSS) is a +/- 110-acre archaeological and ecological preserve located in North Port, Sarasota County, Florida, and owned by the University of Miami. The

property is known to have at least nine species of ground orchids. Most are quite common, with the exception of a rare one which may be familiar from past newsletters and events: *Sacoila lanceolata* var. *paludicola*. Other orchids known to be at LSS:

Habenaria quinqueseta- Michaux's Orchis or longhorn bog orchid (bloom late August-September); common

Eulophia graminea- Chinese crown orchid (bloom summer and fall); native to Asia and considered invasive

Oeceoclades maculata- African spotted orchid (bloom August-November); a widespread non-native species

Eulophia alta- wild coco orchid (bloom August-December);

Zeuxine strateumatica- lawn orchid (bloom October-April); non-native and widespread, but not harmful to other orchids;

Habenaria floribunda- toothed rein orchid (bloom January-March); a common Florida orchid

Sacoila lanceolata var. *paludicola*- swamp beaked orchid (bloom March-April); rare

Sacoila lanceolata- leafless beaked orchid (bloom April-June);

and a type of *Spiranthes* sp., either *Spiranthes praecox* - giant ladies' tresses (bloom January); or *Spiranthes sylvatica* - woodland ladies' tresses (bloom March-May); visually very similar to, and often mistaken for, *S. praecox*.

Over the years, previous articles have appeared in WMS/LSSAS Newsletters which have focused on the ongoing research collaboration between Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and the University of Miami to determine if *S. l.* var. *paludicola* is actually its own species (see May 2025, March/April 2025, Nov/Dec 2023, March/April 2023, Sept/Oct 2022, for more info at wmslss.org).

As an introduction to the other orchids, we will be featuring two to three of these orchids in each newsletter this season (during their blooming cycles). This article will feature two orchids currently blooming at LSS: *Habenaria quinqueseta* and *Eulophia graminea*. The following descriptions are from Paul Martin Brown's 2002 book, *Wild Orchids of Florida*.

Habenaria quinqueseta

H. quinqueseta, also known as Michaux's Orchis and/or the longhorn bog orchid, can be found from South Carolina to Florida and west to Texas, as well as in Mexico, the West Indies, and Central America. It is widespread throughout Florida, though less common in the western panhandle, and they range from 30 to 50 cm in height. They usually exhibit 3 to 7 bright green, elliptical leaves; most spikes have 6 to 8 flowers.



H. quinqueseta close-up (photo by M. Calhoun)



Habenaria quinqueseta blooming at LSS (photo S. H. Koski)

This orchid can be found most often in damp pinelands and hedgerows in large colonies of non-flowering plants.

At LSS, these orchids are only known in limited areas in more open mesic hammocks and at the edges of fields. There may be dozens of densely-packed leaf clusters present, but only a small fraction bloom in any given year. This year, in one small area, over 100 leaf clusters covered the ground as thick as grass, and approximately 15-20 bloomed.

Eulophia graminea

Eulophia graminea [Chinese crown orchid] is a terrestrial orchid, native to subtropical and tropical Asia. It was first discovered in Miami, Florida, in 2007, having arrived in a mulch shipment, and has since spread rapidly northward. It has been found across many different habitats, both on the mainland and on barrier islands, including the Florida Keys. They can be found in rocky areas, hammocks, and even on bare earth. These orchids grow up to 1 meter and emerge from a pseudobulb. They are naturalized and do not appear to be growing in the same areas as the rare native orchids at LSS, but they do have the potential to become invasive, so the three known areas, with one orchid each, are closely monitored. As their native range is colder than Florida, it is suggested that they will likely spread and propagate further north in the future. The UFwebsite notes that it is now found in 13 counties. They recommend removal of this orchid when found.



E. graminea (photo by M. Calhoun)

In addition to *Wild Orchids of Florida*, by Paul Martin Brown, the late Dr. Carlyle Luer, of Sarasota, literally wrote the book on orchids, titled, *The Native Orchids of Florida*, and it is definitely worth a read if you enjoy learning about all of Florida's amazing variety of terrestrial and epiphytic (evolved to inhabit

the canopy) orchids! All orchids at the Little Salt Spring Archaeological and Ecological Preserve are protected by the University of Miami and permission has been granted to Dr. Tatiana Arias and Marie Selby Botanical Gardens for their *Sacoila lanceolata* and *S. l.* var. *paludicola* study. More to come on Orchids of LSS!

THE 77th ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE OF THE FLORIDA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY WAS HELD IN GAINESVILLE, MAY 9-11, 2025

The University of Florida, Gainesville and the Florida Archaeological Council co-hosted the 2025 FAS Annual Meeting and Conference. It was another spectacular meeting held at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Center. The Friday welcoming reception was held at Swamphead Brewery in Gainesville, paper and poster presentations were held Saturday at the conference hotel, and were followed by the banquet and FAS Awards Ceremony. As usual, it was a fun, interesting, and educational weekend! See the program and more information on FAS at www.FASweb.org.

Next year's FAS conference and meeting will be held in April and hosted by Reflections of Manatee, a history museum and learning center at Manatee Mineral Springs Park, Bradenton, where the Friday reception will be held. This will be our back yard and all are encouraged to attend. More information will be included when available.

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Warm Mineral Springs / Little Salt Spring

Archaeological Society

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Visit: www.wmslss.org for Society info and past newsletters

