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# Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society

A Chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society

[www.cgcas.org](http://www.cgcas.org)



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

April 2012



Editor: David Burns

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## April Meeting

### Thursday April 12th

at

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

7 – 8 PM.



**Christopher F. Altes, M.A., University of Florida and Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc.**

*Going with the Flow: Circum-Caribbean Currents, Trade, and Colonization*

The study of contacts across the circum-Caribbean region generally focuses on specialized artifact studies to determine how particular things and people moved across land and water. An often-overlooked aspect of these archaeological investigations is how the natural environment of the Caribbean basin would have structured the movement of people, creating avenues and impediments to travel. Computer models of how people could travel across the region are compared with archaeological data, suggesting links between ancient people stretching from South America to Florida.

Please pre-register for this event by visiting [www.pinellascountyextension.org](http://www.pinellascountyextension.org), clicking the “Online Registration” button, and then choosing the “Weedon Island” tab. You can also call 727-453-6500 to register.



Professor Robert Van de Noort

### **A Special Lecture at Weedon Island**

On Tuesday April 24<sup>th</sup> there will be a special talk at Weedon Island by Robert Van de Noort, Dean of the College of Social Sciences and International Studies and Professor of Wetlands Archaeology at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom.

Dr. Van de Noort studied History (Utrecht) and Archaeology (Amsterdam) and has worked at the British School at Rome and the Universities of Hull and Exeter, where he is currently Professor of Wetland Archaeology and Dean of the College of Social Science and International Studies. Amongst his recent publications are the books *Rethinking Wetland*

His presentation “Climate Change Archaeology” will start at 7:00 p.m. and will look at the impact of sea-level rise, one of the early consequences of global warming.

The talk is free and registration is requested and can be done on-line by visiting [www.weedonislandpreserve.org](http://www.weedonislandpreserve.org).

### **Field Trip to Hontoon Island**

On Saturday, March 31st, 9 CGCAS members and one interested park visitor named Patti, toured Hontoon Island with guide Dr. Ken Sassaman for a fascinating look at middens and features dating to 5,000 BC. A hike through the woods in a thunderstorm only added to the adventure! That evening, we enjoyed wonderful food and conversation at the Blackwater Inn overlooking the beautiful St. Johns River. Sunday morning included a make-your-own pancake breakfast and a look around lovely DeLeon Springs State Park, site of much history and pre-history. Some folks went on to hike through a prairie scrub and hammock trail at Pat's Island in the Ocala National Forest to wrap up a most enjoyable and memorable weekend.



A soggy group of hikers on their tour of Hontoon Island with guide Dr. Ken Sassaman (center)



Preparing for a hearty breakfast of pancakes before a day of hiking

### **Finders Keepers – A Tale of Archaeological Plunder and Obsession by Craig Childs (2010)**

The Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society (CGCAS) Book Club reviewed and discussed this recent book. Advertising indicated that in this book, Craig Childs threatened to expose the soft underbelly of archaeology, cultural resource management (CRM), museums, collectors, etc. All agreed that this did not describe the nature of this well written book authored with lyrical grace and passion concerning the many sides of the ethical issues surrounding archaeology and our distant past. As Craig Childs states in his introduction – “Archaeology poses many moral questions. Consciously or not most of us have already made our choices. This book will help you understand why you made yours.”

Childs forthrightly states – “What we want from archaeology is not a debate over who owns the past, but a meaningful, tangible connection to people who came before us.” But in seeking this objective, archaeology runs into impeding moral and ethical forces from Native American groups, pot hunters, collectors, NAGPRA, salvage excavation and CRM driven by development and massive overstocked and unanalyzed collections in museums.

Craig Childs, as a desert ecologist and amateur archaeologist, honestly looks at the many

moral and ethical issues in discussions with archaeologists (both professional and avocational), CRM personnel, pot hunters/looters, museum curators, artifact collectors and Native American groups – all being stake holders in the question: Who owns the past? and how should we approach preserving and respecting the past? In doing this Childs covers several high profile looting stories involving the Euphronios krater at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the long term artifact scavenging that led to the disastrous Federal arrests throughout the Blanding, UT community in 2009. He also looks at collecting and how it drives a \$4B to \$8B annual business in illicit international and domestic looting and trading.

The strength of this book is that Childs looks at all the issues in an open and understanding manner. He even looks at what the spirit of the artifact deserves regarding being removed from its historical location and context and ending up in a museum archive or display case with much of its impactful story lost. Childs has no “in your face” agenda. He just exposes the moral issues and lets the reader decide on how they would preserve the past for the future. In the end Childs decides for himself personally that “we have enough stuff” in museums already and don’t need any more artifacts to be removed from their historical context. He would leave them where they lie – preserving their story as it has been written. As he states, “There comes a point when it is of greater value to leave things unchanged, not for science but for the things themselves” – and us!

All agreed that this book should be required reading for undergraduate archaeology students and any lay person who has a passion for the past.  
Submitted by Roger Block, Ph.D.

### **Donations needed**

The Florida Anthropological Society is trying to raise money to fund an annual grant to be given to one or more archaeology students conducting research in Florida. Seed money for the grant was donated to FAS by Dot Moore. As part of the fundraising effort, FAS is accepting donations of books for a book sale to be held at the annual FAS meeting in Tallahassee this coming May. All of the proceeds of the sale will go towards the FAS-Dorothy Moore Student Grant.

If you have any books on archaeology, anthropology, or history (they don’t have to be just Florida books) that are in good condition that you would like to donate to this effort, please bring them to the AWIARE Research Station at Weedon Island Preserve this Saturday, April 14, between 10 AM and 2 PM, or you can bring them to our April meeting at the Weedon Island Cultural and Natural History Center, on Thursday April 12. If you would like to make a cash donation, please contact Bob Austin (bob@searchinc.com) for information on how to do so. All donations are tax deductible. Thanks in advance for supporting this worthwhile new grant.

### **Archaeology Summer Camps**

The Alliance for Weedon Island Archaeological Research and Education (AWIARE), in corporation with the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN), plans to hold two exciting archaeology summer camps at Weedon Island Preserve designed for children who are interested in exploring the past. Both camps will be conducted by professional archaeologists, including educators from Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN) presenting their Tommy the tortoise, Junior Archaeologist, program.

The theme of the archaeology camps is Exploring the Past “Hands on Weedon”. The camps will run from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday June 25-29 and again July 23-27. They are open to children ages 7-11 and is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration is \$150.00/camper/week with a limit of 20 campers per week.

Before-camp care is available from 7:45 am to 9:00am for an additional fee of \$50.00 each week.

For information on how to register for the camps, contact Rae Harper at [crharper@usf.edu](mailto:crharper@usf.edu).

### **Mark your Calendar**

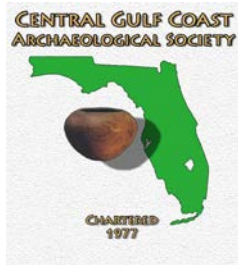
**June 9, 2012** The Annual CGCAS picnic will be held at Maximo Park. We have reserved the large pavilion for the date. Further information will be forthcoming.

### CGCAS Officers/Directors

President	Bob Austin	P.O. Box 2818, Riverview, FL 33568	(813)677-2280
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## The Society

Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society (CGCAS) is an association of amateur and professional archaeologists and concerned citizens dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Florida's great cultural heritage. CGCAS is a chapter of the Florida Anthropological Society (FAS) and is a state chartered non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.



### **Central Gulf Coast Archaeological Society**

P.O. Box 1563  
Pinellas Park, FL

## Membership

Membership is open to anyone with a sincere interest in the cultural past of Florida and who is dedicated to the understanding and preservation of that heritage

Amateurs, professionals and concerned citizens are welcomed as members. Membership is yearly and all dues are payable in January. Contact Cheryl Shaughnessy at P.O. Box 1563 Pinellas Park, FL

	Dues
Regular	\$20.00
Student	10.00
Family	25.00
Life	150.00