

CURRENT RESEARCH:  
Tatham Mound Excavation Results

From September until December of 1985, the Florida State Museum and University of Florida conducted an archaeological field school at the Tatham Mound in eastern Citrus County. This was the second season of work at the site. Excavations were directed by Jeffrey M. Mitchem under the supervision of Jerald T. Milanich of the Florida State Museum. Dale L. Hutchinson (University of Illinois) served as the project osteologist.

University students and volunteers from the Withlacoochee River Archaeology Council concentrated efforts on the central portion of the mound, uncovering at least 53 primary and bundle burials, along with hundreds of scattered bones. At least one cremation was also located.

Five primary burials had European materials buried with them. An extended adult male had two Nueva Cadiz beads and several shell beads in situ on his neck. Another extended burial had several strands of shell beads on the neck and nine faceted Nueva Cadiz beads worn on the wrists or in the pelvic region. A flexed female interment had seven olive-shaped blue glass beads, two Nueva Cadiz beads, and three small silver disc beads present.

A nearby flexed adult male had a necklace of alternating shell and silver beads and one copper bead. Eight of the silver beads were cylindrical or roughly cone-shaped, one was a rolled piece of sheet silver, and two were small discs. This burial was oriented with the head to the east, directly opposite of all the other primary burials in this section of the mound. The fifth burial was an extended young adult female with a necklace of seven faceted chevron beads and 12 shell beads.

The fieldwork also produced a large number of aboriginal and European

artifacts not associated with burials. These include an exotic ground stone pendant, two quartz crystal pendants, an engraved fragment of possible siltstone, a silver disc which may have fragments of leather adhering to it, two faceted chevron beads, seven Nueva Cadiz beads, 21 silver beads, a rolled gold bead, and a small hemisphere of sheet gold. Numerous broken vessels of Pasco Plain, Englewood Incised, St. Johns Plain, St. Johns Check-Stamped, and other ceramic types were also recovered. Several Busycon shell dippers were found on the mound top, near where many others were recovered during the first field season.

The mound has yielded evidence of at least 35 individuals buried in one episode, strongly suggesting a European-introduced disease epidemic. Several sword-like wounds on human bones also reveal some probable Spanish-Indian warfare. The Nueva Cadiz and faceted chevron beads indicate a date of A.D. 1500-1560 for this top stratum of the mound. The location of the site implies that this area may have been visited by the expeditions of Panfilo de Narvaez (1528) and/or Hernando de Soto (1539). The nearby Ruth Smith and Weeki Wachee mounds (Mitchem et al. 1985) have yielded similar assemblages of European materials, suggesting that the residents of all three sites were contacted by the same expedition(s). This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that four of the varieties of Nueva Cadiz beads and one of the faceted chevron bead varieties found at the Tatham mound were previously known only from the Ruth Smith and Weeki Wachee mounds (Smith and Good 1982:48-50).

References Cited

Mitchem, Jeffrey M., Marvin T. Smith, Albert C. Goodyear, and Robert K. Allen  
1985 Early Spanish Contact on the Florida Gulf Coast: The Weeki Wachee and Ruth Smith Mounds. In Indians, Colonists, and Slaves:

Jeffrey M. Mitchem  
Florida State Museum  
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Smith, Marvin T. and Mary Elizabeth Good

1982 Early Sixteenth Century Glass Beads in the  
Spanish Colonial Trade. Cottonlandia Museum  
Publications, Greenwood, Mississippi.

## BOOK REVIEW

**The Myth of Evolution** by Louise Thomas.  
Copyright 1985. 110 pages, hardbound.  
Published by the Exposition Press of  
Florida, Inc., 1701 Blount Rd., Pompano  
Beach, FL 33069. ISBN 0-682-40231-1.  
Retail price: \$7.50.  
Reviewed by Kevin McCartney.

During the current decade science has found itself under heavy fire from many quarters. As science has grown increasingly complex and incomprehensible to the layman, its benefits are more often seen in a sinister context. This problem has been compounded by a deemphasis in the teaching of science and mathematics in our schools (see, for example, Science 231:693-699). In recent years there has even grown a vociferous movement to give equal time in our public schools to the teaching of creationism in science classes. This movement is even joining the political arena, for example, Florida's Governor Graham has become a proponent of it (see Tallahassee Democrat, February 17, 1986). It seems fortuitous, then, that a creationism book should be sent to The Florida Anthropologist for review.

The creationism movement has undergone considerable change since the early 1970's. Creationism is now spoken of as "creation-science." The Christian Bible is no longer used as a primary reference and is often barely mentioned. Creationism is presented instead as a science in its own right. Statements are usually referenced and scientific jargon and formulation is used to give creationism a scientific appearance. The creationists, however, are very selective about the evidence

that they choose to accept and very rarely discuss any scientific problems with their conclusions. Their conclusions are that the earth is very young (generally less than 10,000 years), that species are distinct and unchangable, and that complexities in the geologic record can be explained by a single worldwide catastrophe.

The creationist literature seldom tries to defend the scientific basis for creationism. The scientific method is not used, nor are conclusions rigorously tested. The creationist literature instead seeks to attack the validity and conclusions of science. While creationism is depicted as a science, science is often depicted as a philosophy; creationism and science are thus seen as equal and deserving of equal treatment. Controversies within science are then used to show that scientists themselves are in general disagreement with one another and thus cast doubt on any scientific conclusions. These scientific disagreements do not have to be in the same timeframe; scientific quotations from the turn of the century can be used to show the fallacy of current research, and vice versa. Occurences where scientists were obviously wrong or easily hoaxed are discussed at great length with the implication that they can be wrong everywhere else as well. The general philosophy behind much of the creationist literature appears to be "if science is wrong, then creationism, its only alternative, must be correct."

The book being reviewed here is typical of much of the creationist literature.