

## Scotts Valley Area Curiosities (<http://www.santacruzpl.org/history/unusual/scottsv.shtml>)

by Marion Dale Pokriots

### Remains of a Prehistoric Sea

When ocean waters receded many eons ago, some interesting features were left exposed in the Santa Cruz Mountains, one of which is a ridge of high grade sand on the western edge of Scotts Valley. In the same vicinity, thousands of tiny shark's teeth have been found and collected by school children, as well as scientists. According to naturalist Frank Perry, about 19 species of sharks are represented.

A mile or so beyond "shark's teeth hill", an unusual outcropping of low pillars march up another incline in two almost parallel lines. These hollow sandstone columns are cemented together by extinct sand dollars. Although they were thought to be the ruins of an ancient civilization by early settlers, scientists have concluded that they were formed by a natural geological process.



Frank Perry and the replica of the sea cow skeleton.  
Photo courtesy of Frank Perry

At the Olympia sand quarry, the fossil remains of an extinct [sea cow](#) were discovered in 1963. This 2,000 pound "Dusisiren jordani" lived about 10-12 million years ago in shallow near-shore waters. The fossil bones are at the University of California, Berkeley. Cast replicas of this ancient sea cow are now exhibited in a Japanese museum and at the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History.

Sand Dollar Hill near Weston Road is another interesting left-over from from a former age. This mound has a sixty meter crust composed of "Astrodapsis spatiosus" (extinct sand dollars).

At the north end of the valley the skeleton of a whale was unearthed on property now owned by Borland International.

*(<http://www.gtlsys.com/PriorFossilFinds/ffm299.html>)*

## **Sand Dollars**

### ***Astrodapsis spatiosus***

**Miocene ~ 10 million years old**

*Collected near Scotts Valley, California by Lani D.*

