CARBONIFEROUS FOSSILS

Fossil echinoderms, etc.

by F. Deis

1. This is a crinoid and blastoid plate from the Burlington Limestone Formation of Missouri. This piece has one uncommon crinoid on it, Cactcrinus obesus, and a blastoid, Globoblastus norwoodia. Both the crinoid and the blastoid are a gorgeous pearl white color and sit on an orange matrix. Both have been cleaned using an air abrasive unit and microscope to allow the natural beauty of the pieces to be exposed. Very striking display piece. The crinoid measures about 1 1/2” while the blastoid measures 7/8” and the matrix measures 3” x 3”. The time frame of these strata is Mississippian, or in European terminology, the Carboniferous.

2. The club moss Lepidodendron grew into large trees, and the fossils are common in the Pennsylvanian and Permian ages. The black fossil with an "armor" pattern is the bark of this tree.

MAZON CREEK FOSSILS:

Mazon Creek, in Illinois, is a lagerstatte which has fossils in concretions, dating from the Pennsylvanian age.

3. This is probably the second most abundantly found jelly fish from the famous Pit 11 in Illinois near the Mazon Creek area. It is called Octomedusa pieckorum which had eight tentacles-this specimen does not show any that I can see and possibly this one could be a different undescribed species--it does under different lighting seem to show 4 or 5 of some kind of very short nobby projections. In the center where some specimens have a clearly defined mouth there is some lump of matrix making it look like a mouth where it should be.

4. The Tully Monster is one of the oddest fossil animals. It looks like a tiny version of the Loch Ness Monster, or some aquatic dinosaur, but it is an invertebrate. It evidently was a predator and a carnivore, and it is the state fossil of Illinois.

5. Annularia – Here is one side of a concretion from that world famous Pennsylvanian age locality known as the Mazon Creek area. It is a large Annularia plant which sits fully within a partial ironstone.