

Ruffin Tucker is recognized as an Honorary Member
Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Fossil Club, November 3, 2012

By-laws for the North Carolina Fossil Club describe various types of memberships, including Honorary Membership for long and distinguished service to the Club.

Rules of Procedure, Section 2. A recommendation for Honorary Membership may be made in writing by any Member of the Board of Directors. An Honorary Member is elected for life by a unanimous secret vote of the Board of Directors. An Honorary Member will exercise the rights and privileges of an Individual Member without payment of dues.

The North Carolina Fossil Club seldom names honorary members, but this year the Board of Directors and officers recognize Ruffin Tucker as an Honorary Member based on the following.

Tucker is a long-time member of the North Carolina Fossil Club. He has proven himself to be an inquisitive student of the geology of south western North Carolina and a patient collector of what the rock holds – once going seven years between finds. That combination has been fortunate for the State of North Carolina since he has distinguished himself as a dedicated collector of some of the oldest fossils found in the world – certainly the oldest found in North Carolina – organisms from the Ediacaran Period. He has been named a Field Associate for the NC Museum of Natural Sciences and has brought honor and recognition to our Club.

The Ediacaran fossils are named for the Ediacara Mountains of Australia, where most of these life-forms have been found. They were multi-cellular soft body marine life forms with tubular or frond shapes that date ~ 585 - 542 million years ago. The scientific community in recognizing these fossils had to push the Geological Time Scale into the Pre-Cambrian to re-write what we know about early beginnings of the earth. The Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh is a proud recipient of Ruffin Tucker's collecting success in Stanly County. He has presented what he has learned to the public through personal presentations, by allowing his specimens to be photographed for public display including the fossil gallery on our website, and through multiple fossil displays.

Ruffin Tucker is known for his sense of community. To take his passion for science back to the south western region of North Carolina, he organized mini fossil fairs where he saw the opportunity to reach out to people in new ways. For several years, he has invited other Club members to join him at events that he initiated for the Rankin Museum in Ellerbe, NC and at the Arbor Festival in Norwood, NC. At these events, Ruffin has proven himself to be an organizer, a person who makes things happen even if it means having a Town Manager or his grandchild help out, and he does it with humility behind a display that never screams what a huge contribution he has made to Paleontology and to the State of North Carolina.