

MINING INTERVIEW



Maraia Vula

Managing Editor Business

Email: maraia.vula@fijisun.com.fj

Robert Phillips is Senior Exploration Manager in Fiji with Canadian Miner Thunderstruck Resources.

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ROBERT PHILLIPS

One look at Robert Phillips, he would look like a model, or a professional surfer.

But Mr Phillips is a Senior Exploration Manager and Geologist, by profession at Thunderstruck Resources Ltd based in Fiji.

According to the Canadian company, Mr Phillips brings years of experience in drill program management, geochemical and geophysical programme design and interpretation and ore body modeling.

“As Project Geologist for global resource companies, he has advanced their understanding of deposits by managing all facets of the exploration process - sampling, mapping, drilling, interpreting results and creating 3D modeling and resource estimates.

“He has also trained with the Canadian Armed Forces where he completed infantry, weapons and specialist training.

“That breadth of experience sets up Mr Phillips to provide geological leadership and logistical oversight to the various Thunderstruck exploration programmes which will soon be underway in Fiji,” the company said.

Mr Phillips said: “I’m human, I think. Love long walks on the beach and longer dips in the ocean.

“I feel strongly that puns are indeed a higher form of humour and never take geology related ones for granite?.

Below is an excerpt of an interview with Mr Phillips

Tell us a bit about your profession?

Geology is about, well, everything.

Everything that has ever happened to every species we have ever known has happened on this pale blue dot, the earth. And geology, that’s the study of its 4.5 billion year history and the planets beyond.

My job takes me all over the world studying our living planet while I try to unravel some of its mysteries.

I have been fortunate to travel into some of the earths most remote and stunning locations as a scientist.

My privileged research has allowed me to scan the Marianas Trench, the deepest place

ON THE Lighter Note

- **Do you have daily work habits?**
1. Working and living as much as I can through personal interaction and relationship building is key to my successes. There are myriad project management and scientific software packages I use but, getting out there in the jungle, working for my teams and physically being part of what is going on has no equal.
2. Lists. If I didn’t make lists I would be completely lost. I make a list before I finish for the day of what I am going to do the next. This clears my head and lets me relax for the night. My favourite thing to do is include some easy things on the list so success comes early in the day. Make a coffee – check, see the sunrise – check, and then before you know it, you’re off to the races.
- **What is your favourite dish to cook?** Without a doubt, general Tsao Chicken. I have been working on perfecting this Americanised Chinese food dish that hails from a Qing dynasty statesman for years. I have yet to unlock all its secrets, so my diligent work continues.



SUN INTERVIEW

on earth, cross the dry deserts of Arabian Peninsula, trek through the darkest parts of the Amazon and more. It is always amazing to me that in this field, no matter how much we know, we are just beginning to understand our planet, and its place in the universe.

It is an endlessly humbling profession.

Did your family background or where you grew up, have an any influence on your career choices?

I grew up in a farming town with an excited engineer and wide-eyed dreamer for parents who taught me to be enthusiastic and curious about life.

That curiosity didn’t always lead down the easiest path though. I was a terrible carpenter, a mouthy infantryman and an even worse farmhand.

It was a second chance at university that got me started down the path of a geologist.

Someone who has since become a mentor and lifelong friend recognised my energetic inquisitiveness and introduced me to this career path.

I am blessed to have found a career that challenges my understanding of the world every day.

Tell us a bit about Thunderstruck Resources and its focus?

Thunderstruck Resources is focused on developing Gold, Silver, Copper, and Zinc assets here in Fiji through the application of modern technologies to ancient rocks.

With focused field work and academic research, we are delineating high priority targets and systematically exploring them with national and international funding.

For investors not entirely familiar with Jensen’s, Liwa Ridge and Vatuvatulevu projects, what are its key advantages and why is Thunderstruck currently focused on this specific region?

We are actively exploring the Liwa Ridge prospects for gold and silver.

Years of hard work in the field has brought us to a stage where we are ready to begin drilling the highest-grade prospects.

Having mapped favourable veins and structures at surface that carry gold, we are starting our drills next

week to test the continuity of gold and silver at depth.

Can you also provide us some updates on the drill programme at your current project sites?

We have just finished drilling at Korokayiu, our Zinc and Copper prospect here in Fiji. Our drilling this year was garnering ore material for metallurgical testing.

Following a successful drilling campaign our geophysical team from Japan has landed in Nadi.

They are eager to get out of quarantine this week and head straight to work exploring more promising prospects at Korokayiu.

What impact has the current COVID-19 had on your professional and personal life?

First and foremost, I have been so fortunate during the pandemic to have work, be able to offer employment, and to have been allowed into Fiji to continue our work along side a great local team.

Getting on a one-way flight during a global lockdown, not knowing when I will be able to see friends and family again, was not an easy decision.

That flight, however, landed me in a country filled with strong and resilient people with a long and proud history, who I learn from every day.

There is nowhere else in the I would rather be during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every day I am welcomed by warm smiles, tropical waters, and the best waves in the world, all while getting to pursue my curiosities as a geologist.

The pandemic has slowed down the world and this is the place to be.

By removing easy travel my contemporaneous need to live along with a fear of missing out has led to presence. Through that presence I can really live in, and experience Fiji.

What are some of your future plans?

There are just too many to list.

Do you have a favourite app?

I do my best to stay away from my phone.

Other than what is necessary for work I choose to disengage from social media as much as possible.

Life is best viewed without a phone screen in the way.

Feedback: maraia.vula@fijisun.com.fj