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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Wednesday, October 3, 2018, the National Mall will be hosting the ultimate fossil and paleontology experience for visitors in the largest celebration of National Fossil Day yet. The American Geosciences Institute (AGI) is proud to celebrate this event, organized by the National Park Service as part of AGI's Earth Science Week, to promote public awareness and stewardship of fossils.

National Fossil Day gathers scientists, educators, fossil enthusiasts, and the general public across the country at parks, classrooms, museums, and other venues to share their passion and knowledge about ancient life, paleontology, and public fossil resources.

The National Park Service and National Fossil Day Partners from the greater Washington, D.C. area will be hosting a series of activities, fossil displays, interactive demonstrations, and will have fossil themed giveaways for visitors throughout the day. This event will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the pathway between the Smithsonian Castle and the National Museum of Natural History.

This program on the National Mall, free and open to the public, will include a “Fossil Photo Booth” hosted by AGI—see yourself in paleo history! Check out the other exciting partner activities below:

- Be sworn in as a Junior Paleontologist and receive your official junior paleontologist badge by completing the National Park Service's Junior Paleontologist workbook.
- Search through ancient marine sediments for shark teeth and shells with paleontologists from the Smithsonian Institution Paleobiology Department.
- Compare yourself to *Astrodon johnstoni*, the largest dinosaur found east of the Mississippi River (and Maryland's official state dinosaur) and learn about the other creatures it lived with, hosted by the Maryland-National Capitol Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC)'s Dinosaur Park in Prince George's County, Md.
- Take a look at the fossil teeth of Megalodon, the largest shark to ever evolve, and other marine fossils from the Calvert Marine Museum collections.
- Learn about public fossil resources from the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology.
- Meet paleontology professors and students from George Washington University, the University of Maryland, and Virginia Tech sharing their latest research and discoveries.
- Experience a 3D virtual fossil K-12 educational expedition at the Grand Canyon created by our first National Fossil Day high school partner, Franklin County High School, and Virtual Worlds of Learning.
- While the National Mall event will take place on October 3, National Fossil Day is officially celebrated at various locations nationwide on Wednesday, October 17, 2018. Look for fossil-themed activities and materials in the Earth Science Week 2018 Toolkit.

Reaching over 50 million people annually, Earth Science Week has been led by AGI in cooperation with its sponsors and the geoscience community since 1998. To learn more, please visit www.earthsciweek.org. To order your Earth Science Week Toolkits, see <http://www.earthsciweek.org/materials>. You may also call AGI Publications to place your order at 703-379-2480. To learn more about National Fossil Day Visit: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/fossilday/index.htm>.

About AGI

The American Geosciences Institute (AGI) is a nonprofit federation of 52 scientific and professional associations that represents more than 260,000 geoscientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.

AGI is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to serving the geoscience community and addressing the needs of society. AGI headquarters are in Alexandria, Virginia.

The American Geosciences Institute represents and serves the geoscience community by providing collaborative leadership and information to connect Earth, science, and people.

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