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National Fossil Day to Be Held During Earth Science Week 2011

Alexandria, VA - The American Geological Institute (AGI) and the National Park Service (NPS) are collaborating on the second annual National Fossil Day - October 12, 2011 - during Earth Science Week (October 9-15).

Join paleontologists, educators, and students in fossil-related events and activities across the country in parks, classrooms, and online during National Fossil Day. NPS has developed resources and activities to highlight the scientific and educational value of paleontology and the importance of preserving fossils for future generations. Visit the NPS National Fossil day site at <http://nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/> for standards-based lesson plans, fossil trading cards, videos, a virtual museum exhibit featuring dinosaurs, and more. Fossil-themed activities are also available in the Earth Science Week 2011 toolkit available at <http://www.earthsciweek.org/materials/index.html>.

The National Park Service is sponsoring a National Fossil Day Art and Photo Contest. Entries should address the theme "Fossils in My Backyard." This contest is open to any U.S. resident. Entries are due October 5, 2011. See complete contest guidelines at http://nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/art_contest.cfm.

In addition to online resources, local events, and contests, NPS and the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History will hold the National Fossil Day kick-off event in Washington, D.C. This celebration on the National Mall will take place from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on October 12, 2011. All are invited to learn how to become a Junior Paleontologist, study the history of life that has been preserved in over 230 NPS units, and hunt for your own fossils. For more information on the kickoff event, visit <http://www.nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/natmallevent.cfm>.

AGI coordinates Earth Science Week annually in cooperation with its sponsors and the geoscience community as a service to the public. Each year, community groups, educators, and interested citizens organize celebratory events. Earth Science Week offers the public opportunities to discover the earth sciences and engage in responsible stewardship of the Earth. Earth Science Week is supported by the U.S. Geological Survey, the AAPG Foundation, NASA, the National Park Service, ExxonMobil, and ESRI. To learn more about Earth Science Week and National Fossil Day, go to <http://www.earthsciweek.org/>.

The American Geological Institute is a nonprofit federation of 50 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. 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.

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