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Media Web site: <http://newsdesk.si.edu>

Calendar Listing

WHAT: National Fossil Day Celebration on the National Mall

WHEN: Wednesday, October 13, 2010; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

WHERE: Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History
10th Street & Constitution Avenue

On the National Mall
15th Street & Constitution Avenue

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Join paleontologists from the Smithsonian and park rangers from the National Park Service to celebrate the first annual National Fossil Day.

These two organizations are partnering to host the first National Fossil Day in the nation's capital, during Earth Science Week, in order to promote public awareness and stewardship of fossils, as well as foster a greater appreciation of their scientific and educational value.

The day will be devoted to celebrating the diversity of fossils for understanding the history of life, promoting understanding of fossils as non-renewable resources, highlighting the science-based management of fossils, and establishing partnerships among organizations and agencies that focus on fossils.

More information on the event, including a schedule, educational activities and more, can be found at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/index.cfm>. For more information on how to get your organization involved, please call (703) 289-2555.

A list of the day's events by location and time include:

On The National Mall

10:00-10:30 Dedication ceremony for the first annual National Fossil Day

10:30-1:30 Smithsonian's Department of Paleobiology Presentations

10:30-11:00 "Teaching Paleontology to Teachers" by Dr. Michael Brett-Surman

11:30-12:00 "Amber and Plant Exudates" by Dr. Jorge Santiago-Blay

12:30-1:00 "Measuring Extinction" by Dr. Peter Wagner

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1:30-2:00 “Drawing Fossils” by Mary Parrish, Scientific Illustrator

10:30-2:00 Fossil Activities

Be a Junior Ranger Paleontologist

Learn how to become a “Junior Ranger Paleontologist” and earn an official junior ranger badge.

Fossil Collecting

Screen sediments to find fossils to take home.

Fossil Casting

Make your own replica fossils in plaster to take home.

Fossils as Natural Resources

Learn about the history of life preserved in over 230 units of the National Park Service.

Washington D.C. Fossils

Learn about fossils in the local area during family-friendly “Fossil Talks” with paleontologists and rangers from Dinosaur Park, Calvert Maritime Museum, and Fort Washington Park.

Fossil Identification

Scientists from the Smithsonian will be available to identify any fossils visitors bring from home.

At National Museum of Natural History

10:30-2:00 Fossil Activities

One Piece at a Time

Excavate and identify your own fossil from a block of 17 million year old sediment.

What is a Dinosaur?

Use physical characteristics of prehistoric reptiles to distinguish between dinosaurs and non-dinosaurs.

What is a Fossil?

Separate plant and animal trace fossils from body fossils.

Ask a Paleontologist

Talk with Natural History Museum scientists about their paleontological research and what it’s like to be a paleontologist, including Foraminifera specialists, Dr. Martin Buzas and Jennifer Jett, as well as fossil plant specialists, Dan Chaney and Dr. Scott Wing.

Ancient Washington D.C.

Explore fossil clues to ancient Washington D.C.’s environments, and discover how life

here has changed over time.

FossiLab

Visit the Paleontology Preparation Laboratory, and talk with paleontologists about the importance of fossil preparation.

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