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New Exhibition at the Bullock Museum Brings Visitors Face to Face with Sharks

Exhibition reveals surprising facts about one of the ocean's most magnificent and misunderstood species

NOVEMBER 7, 2023 (AUSTIN, TX) — *Sharks*, a new special exhibition, will open at the Bullock Texas State History Museum on Saturday, November 11. The exhibition brings to life the incredible diversity of sharks with dozens of life-sized models and offers visitors a unique look at prehistoric and modern species, their habitats and hunting styles, and the conservation threats these spectacular animals face today. *Sharks* is a bilingual exhibition, presented in both English and Spanish.

“We’re very excited to bring *Sharks* to the Bullock, and it’s a perfect pairing with our current IMAX documentary, *Secrets of the Sea*,” said Margaret Koch, Director of the Bullock Museum. “With so much attention focused on our coastal waters and these incredible creatures, this exhibition presents a fantastic opportunity for visitors of all ages to learn more about them and the environments in which they thrive.”

Today, more than 540 species of sharks and more than 670 species of their close relatives—the rays, skates, and chimaeras—inhabit nearly all the world’s marine environments, from coral reefs to the polar seas, and even freshwater rivers. At least 40 species of sharks call Texas waters their home, including bull sharks, which have been found miles upriver from the Gulf, and “winter Texans” like short fin makos. Whale sharks, the largest fish in the world, have also been known to make visits to the Texas coast.

Organized by the American Museum of Natural History in New York, *Sharks* showcases current research, casts of fossils from AMNH’s extensive collections, and a spectacular “parade” of sharks highlighting ancient and modern shark species. The models include the prehistoric mega-predator megalodon, the “*Tyrannosaurus rex* of the seas,” which was so large it preyed on whales. Visitors to the exhibit can explore shark anatomy and senses and learn to hunt like a hammerhead shark through touchless interactives and take a picture inside the life-size jaws of the prehistoric megalodon.



“The perception of sharks—that they are large, vicious predators to be feared— couldn’t be farther from the truth. In fact, humans are much more of a threat to sharks than they are to us,” said John Sparks, curator in the Department of Ichthyology at the American Museum of Natural History and curator of *Sharks*. “We hope people walk away from this exciting exhibition with a new appreciation for sharks and understand they are magnificent creatures that should be revered, not feared.”

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Programs and events celebrating sharks and other sea life will be offered throughout the run of the exhibit, including talks with experts, children's activities, and film screenings.

Sharks will be on view at the Bullock Museum from November 11, 2023 to March 24, 2024. For more information, visit TheStoryofTexas.com.

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Sharks is organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York. The Museum gratefully acknowledges Warner Bros. Discovery for its generous support of *Sharks*. A selection of footage in *Sharks* has been provided by Discovery's *Shark Week*.

The Bullock Museum, a division of the Texas State Preservation Board, is funded by Museum members, donors, and patrons, the Texas State History Museum Foundation, and the State of Texas.

ABOUT THE BULLOCK MUSEUM

The Bullock Texas State History Museum, a division of the State Preservation Board and an accredited institution of the American Alliance of Museums, illuminates and celebrates Texas history, people, and culture. With dynamic, award-winning exhibitions, educational programming for all ages, and an IMAX® theater with the largest screen in Texas, the Museum collaborates with more than 700 museums, libraries, archives and individuals across the world to bring the Story of Texas to life.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (AMNH)

The American Museum of Natural History, founded in 1869 with a dual mission of scientific research and science education, is one of the world's preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. The Museum encompasses more than 40 permanent exhibition halls, galleries for temporary exhibitions, the Rose Center for Earth and Space including the Hayden Planetarium, and the Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation. The Museum's scientists draw on a world-class permanent collection of more than 34 million specimens and artifacts, some of which are billions of years old, and on one of the largest natural history libraries in the world. Through its Richard Gilder Graduate School, the Museum offers two of the only free-standing, degree-granting programs of their kind at any museum in the U.S.: the Ph.D. program in Comparative Biology and the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Earth Science residency program. Visit amnh.org for more information.

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