



# *Sharks!* Science Exhibition

Bruce Museum, Greenwich, Connecticut  
April 20 – September 1, 2019



The *Sharks!* exhibition at the Bruce Museum will feature jaws and teeth from numerous species, living and extinct, as well as life-size models of a great white, hammerhead, and these black tip sharks, on loan from the Mystic Aquarium. Photo by Paul Mutino.

**GREENWICH, CT, March 18, 2019** – Few creatures inspire so much fascination – and fear – as sharks. However, sharks are far from the mindless killing machines that they are commonly portrayed to be.

Worldwide, biologists have identified about 470 species of sharks, a cartilaginous fish in the class of *Elasmobranchii*. Some live peaceful lives skimming plankton from the water with specialized gill rakers. Others have robust social lives and remember their favored companions year after year. A few turn the phrase “cold-blooded killer” on its head even more thoroughly and actually have warm blood pumping through their veins.

Opening on April 20 at the Bruce Museum in Greenwich, CT, a new exhibition, *Sharks!*, will pose this question: How much of what is commonly “known” about sharks is fact, and how much is fiction?



To answer this question, visitors to this interactive science exhibition will get up close and personal with life-sized models of a great white, hammerhead, and some of their living and extinct cousins. They will watch live sharks developing within eggs, and compare and contrast jaws from nearly 20 different species.

*Sharks!* will also address environmental change. The oceans are growing warmer and increasingly impacted by chemicals, plastic, and other manmade pollutants. Sharks are harvested by the millions to feed a seemingly insatiable demand for shark fin soup and other products. Can these ancient predators survive in the Anthropocene Era?

“To look at a shark is to see over 400 million years of evolutionary success,” says Paleontologist Kate Dzikiewicz, Bruce Museum Science Curatorial Associate and curator of the exhibition. “That said, most species of sharks are long-lived, they mature late, and they produce relatively few ‘pups,’ which makes them especially vulnerable to over-exploitation and population decline.”

“Sharks are also apex predators, which means declining shark populations affect the entire ocean ecosystem,” says Dzikiewicz, who also serves as Manager of the Bruce Museum Seaside Center. “Overfishing, bycatch capture, and habitat degradation are all having a profound effect on this keystone, and charismatic, group.”

*Sharks!* will be on view in the Bruce Museum’s Science Gallery through September 1, 2019. The exhibition will be complemented by a series of educational workshops, programs for school groups, and presentations. Educational programming will focus on confronting myths and misconceptions about sharks, such as the notion that sharks are inherently dangerous to humans.

On Tuesday, May 14, 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Captain Jesse Paluch, Chief Environmental Conservation Officer, NYS ENCON Police Bureau of Environmental Crimes Investigation, will present “Predator Turned Prey: The Controversial Trade in Sharks and Shark Fin Products.” His talk will take us behind the scenes to uncover the hard truths about the worldwide trade in shark products, what effects it is having on species’ populations, and the local and global efforts to restrict the illegal trade. The Museum will open at 6:30 pm; with light refreshments preceding the lecture, which begins at 7:00 pm. Members and students with ID, free; non-members \$15. Reservations required.

The Bruce is grateful for support of this exhibition from The Charles M. and Deborah G. Royce Exhibition Fund; and the Connecticut Office of the Arts.



*Helicoprion* Tooth Whorl. Bruce Museum Collection.



Tiger Shark Jaws. Bruce Museum Collection.



Shark Skeleton in Jar. On loan from the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History.



Hammerhead Skull. Bruce Museum Collection.



Whale Shark Jaw. Bruce Museum Collection.



Megalodon Jaw. On loan from Mystic Aquarium.



Assorted Shark Teeth. On loan from private collection.

Above photos by Paul Mutino.



BRUCE MUSEUM  
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## Press Release

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### **About the Bruce Museum**

The Bruce Museum is located in a park setting just off I-95, exit 3, at 1 Museum Drive in Greenwich, Connecticut. The Museum is also a 5-minute walk from the Metro-North Greenwich Station. The Museum is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm; closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors and students with ID, and free for members and children less than five years. Individual admission is free on Tuesday. Free on-site parking is available and the Museum is accessible to individuals with disabilities. For additional information, call the Bruce Museum at 203-869-0376 or visit [brucemuseum.org](http://brucemuseum.org).

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