



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### MEGALODON MAKEOVER

#### *New Discoveries Prompt Dental Transformation*

**SOLOMONS, MD – January 5, 2022** – After 25 years, the Calvert Marine Museum’s life-sized skeletal model of the extinct shark, *Otodus megalodon*, will receive new teeth! Over many years, paleontologists have made new discoveries that improve understanding of this extinct shark’s anatomy, including dental evidence that supports this historic transformation.

The new fossils are referred to as associated dentitions, which are sets of teeth that came from a single shark. These exceptionally rare discoveries allow paleontologists to more confidently reconstruct the tooth patterns exhibited by megalodon. With this new information available, the exhibit is being updated to reflect the most current fossil evidence to make the representation as scientifically accurate as possible.

When megalodon was first described, it was named *Carcharodon megalodon* and was suggested to be the immediate ancestor of the great white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*). Consequently, the Calvert Marine Museum’s skeletal model was created by scaling up the size of a great white shark. However, paleontologists now recognize that the two sharks are more distantly related, and likely last shared a common ancestor more than 65 million years ago.

The most complete set of megalodon teeth was found in the Four Corners phosphate mine in Polk County, Florida (aka the Bone Valley region). A total of 95 teeth were recovered that all originated from one shark! This shark was estimated to be 40.7 ft long, which matches quite closely with the museum’s 37.5 ft skeletal model. To improve the accuracy of the model, CMM staff are replacing the teeth with exact replicas of the associated teeth found in the Bone Valley region.

To make these changes to the exhibit, Calvert Marine Museum staff will remove the jaws from the megalodon skeletal model. The jaws will be brought into the Paleontology prep lab for the remodeling. Museum visitors will be able to watch this historic update to this iconic exhibit through the glass window that peers into the prep lab. New information panels will be placed in the exhibit hall, explaining how scientific evidence is utilized to guide the exhibit design.

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*Explore how the prehistoric past, natural environments, and maritime heritage come to life and tell a unique story of the Chesapeake Bay. The Calvert Marine Museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$9.00 for adults; \$7.00 for seniors, military with valid I.D, AAA and AARP members; \$4.00 for children ages 5 - 12; children under 5 and museum members are admitted free. For more information about the museum, upcoming events, or membership, visit the website at [www.calvertmarinemuseum.com](http://www.calvertmarinemuseum.com) or call 410-326-2042. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).*

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**Figures Attached:**



**Figure 1.** The Calvert Marine Museum's 37.5-foot long skeletal model of the extinct megatooth shark, *Otodus megalodon*, newly installed.



**Figure 2.** CMM staff and volunteers successfully move the megalodon skeletal jaw to the Paleontology prep lab.