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FAMOUS MASTODON TOOTH A HIGHLIGHT OF SPECIAL EXHIBIT AT THE SANTA CRUZ MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

NEW ORIGINAL EXHIBIT, "UNDERGROUND: UNEARTHING UNSEEN WORLDS" ON DISPLAY OCTOBER 6 - NOVEMBER 12 TO INCLUDE PUBLIC PROGRAMS, HALLOWEEN PARTY, AND MORE

SANTA CRUZ, CA — OCTOBER 6, 2024 — The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History is excited to announce that the mastodon tooth that made world headlines this past June will be on display as part of a special exhibit that delves into the mysteries beneath our feet. [Underground: Unearthing Unseen Worlds](#) will offer visitors of all ages the opportunity to explore this largely hidden ecosystem teeming with life, past and present. The exhibit opens October 6 as part of a [First Friday](#) celebration and runs through November 12.

Since its very brief exhibition in June, [the tooth](#) has been undergoing conservation in collaboration with California State Parks. "We're excited to bring the tooth back on exhibit for a short period so that people can learn more about the conservation process and what it takes to care for fossil specimens so that they can remain stable long term," said museum Collections Manager, Kathleen Aston. Winter storms likely unearthed this important ice age specimen, and fossils, much like layers of the earth, help to tell the story of the planet's long history.

In addition to exploring deep time and geologic processes, this exhibit will also examine the array of life that makes its home in the underground, from microscopic fungi to large mammals. Visitors will see both living and preserved insects that inhabit the underground, many of which are at the root of our most common fears. "I hope Museum visitors will reflect upon the importance of the underground as an ecosystem that provides critical resources for our everyday lives. This exhibit asks people to think about the mark they're making on this landscape and what it will communicate to future generations," says Liz Broughton, Visitor Experience Manager.

The free opening on October's First Friday will include local experts on hand to ID rocks and fossils, and numerous partner organizations with displays on everything from recycling to archaeology. Complementary programs, including lectures and walks, will take place throughout the month, culminating with the annual [Museum of the Macabre](#) Halloween party on October 28 for the 21 and over crowd. This highly popular indoor and outdoor event will include a screening of the movie *Tremors*, an underground-themed costume contest, access to see the exhibit, and more.

Learn more about the exhibit:

<https://www.santacruzmuseum.org/exhibits/underground-unearting-unseen-worlds/>

About The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History

The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History's mission is *connecting people with nature and science to inspire stewardship of the natural world*. The Museum was first established with the personal collection of local naturalist and lighthouse keeper Laura Hecox. Founded in 1904, becoming an independent nonprofit in 2009, it has a proud history as the first public museum in Santa Cruz. The Museum is located in Tyrrell Park, bordered by its Garden Learning Center featuring native plants and grasses, and a life-size gray whale model greeting the public. The historical collection, public programs, and location make this institution a cherished landmark located across from the entrance to Seabright State Beach. Learn more about the Museum at santacruzmuseum.org.

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