EVERYTHING

You Need to Know About

SHARK

TOOTH HUNTING

Contents

Everything You Need to Know About Shark Tooth Hunting

Chapter 1: A History of Sharks

Most scientists think that sharks have been around for more than four hundred million years, which suggests that they potentially existed long before the dinosaurs did. Experts also believe that these creatures descended from a tiny fish, shaped like a leaf without any bones, fins or eyes. Eventually, these fish evolved into two of the most common fish groups we see today. These include cartilaginous fish and bony fish.

There are over three thousand shark species documented in the fossil record, but there is a high likelihood that there were plenty of other species around which eventually disappeared without leaving any trace.

Once a shark dies, its skeleton begins rotting because it is made from cartilage rather than bone. Therefore, the only parts these creatures leave behind are the fin spines, dermal denticles and their teeth. Scientists often use these parts, especially the teeth to determine what the shark ate, and, in some cases, it even helps them identify the species it came from.

The fossil records of sharks are quite diverse and abundant, showing that certain species that lived over one hundred and fifty million years ago, shared some similarities with today's sharks. The Cladoselache was one of the earliest shark species out there and like most sharks, the Cladoselache's mouth was present at their snout's front. This trait is shared by many of the sharks you see today, including devil rays, angel shark, frilled shark and the megamouth shark.

Believe it or not, there is a megalodon shark whose teeth measure about 17 cm, indicating that this predator may have been as long as 2 buses. The megalodon specie is an ancestor of today's notorious white shark.

Sharks have been dominant in the marine food chain ever since they have been around. There was a brief period when other massive marine reptiles joined these creatures. The plesiosaurs and mosasaurs, in particular, were dominant in the marine food chain along with sharks. However, the later was the only group to survive.

Chapter 2: Identifying Common Shark Species

As mentioned earlier, sharks have existed for over four hundred million years, suggesting that they have been in the ocean a lot longer than trees have been on land. These majestic creatures are often misunderstood, yet they continue to instill fear in most people. Despite there being more than five hundred shark species out there, humans are surprisingly not in their preferred foods.

Every shark species has different appearances, anatomy, hunting styles etc. Surprisingly, some of them do not even eat meat. Now, let us look at some common shark types swimming in oceans across the globe.

Great White Shark

The Great White Shark is feared across the globe and is arguably the most unique looking shark because of its white underbelly, grey body and a mouth with three hundred razor sharp teeth. To say that this creature is iconic would be an understatement – it is definitely a lot more. The great white shark can grow as high as twenty feet long. That said, the average is height of this creature is about fifteen feet and the creature can weigh as much as five thousand pounds.

Great white sharks live all across the world in coastal, cool waters. Since this shark species prefers living in coastal waters, it increases their likelihood of encountering and possibly attacking human beings. Remember, human beings are not the preferred choice of food for sharks and most attacks generally happen out of curiosity.

Tiger Shark

The biggest tiger shark ever captured was about eighteen feet long and weighed over three thousand pounds. However, the average weight and length of these creatures is twelve hundred pounds and fifteen to eighteen feet long. As the name suggests, tiger sharks have dark stripes on their body, just like a tiger.

These creatures are considered apex predators despite the fact that they often fall prey to certain whale species, especially killer whales. Tiger sharks usually live in places with warm waters and often spend time deep beneath the ocean (about one thousand feet down).

These sharks are quite notorious because of their attacks on human beings. This does not mean in any way that they prefer eating human meat. Instead, it merely suggests that tiger sharks would eat pretty much anything when they're hungry, even if it is the garbage dumped in the ocean.

Whale Shark

Whale shark are the biggest fish present in the ocean. This shark species has stripes and spots on their grey blue body. They can grow as big as forty-five feet long and can potentially live for a hundred years. Many consider the whale sharks as gentle giants and there have not been any reports of these sharks attacking human beings.

These sharks are filter feeders as their diet mostly consists of fish and plankton eggs filtered through their sharp, tiny teeth.

Bull Shark

Bull sharks have short snouts and are known for their aggressive behavior. These creatures act and look quite similar to bulls and their average weight is around five hundred pounds. Bull sharks have a dark grey body with a white belly. Their aggression makes them arguably the most notorious shark species out there and there have been multiple incidents where these sharks have attacked humans.

Chapter 3: Shark Species Found on the East Coast

The east coast has a vast variety of sharks that call it home. In most cases, they swim towards the north during the summers when the hot weather makes the water warm. While some sharks tend to venture close to the shore occasionally, they usually stay away from the coast by several miles. Here are a few common shark species found on the east coast.

Dusky Shark

The dusky shark species is usually three to twelve feet tall and is often found around the Atlantic Coast usually from Florida to Cape Cod. This shark has a rounded snout with sharp, triangular teeth. Because of overfishing over the years, the Dusky Shark is now off limits to commercial and recreational fishers.

Sandbar Shark

This is arguably the most common shark species of the Chesapeake Bay. Its heavyset body ranges from 2 to 8 feet and its fins are considered incredibly valuable, especially to commercial fishers. Some common uses of the sandbar shark's fins include the shark fin soup, a popular dish in several Asian countries. However, shark finning is strictly prohibited in the U.S.

Sand Tiger Shark

The sand tiger shark is usually found in the Ocean City waters. This shark's average height is around ten feet long and it is usually found around Delaware Bay. What makes this shark species different from

many other species is the fact that its narrow, long teeth stick out even if its mouth is closed. Additionally, these sharks are famous for usually having rust-colored or brownish gray spots on their bodies.

Spiny Dogfish Shark

The spiny dogfish shark usually grows about five feet long and is usually seen in different parts of South Carolina, Cape Cod and Chesapeake Bay. As their name suggests, these sharks have spikes or spines present on their dorsal fins. What is more, their mouth opens in a downwards direction, helping them look for food around the ocean floor.

Shortfin Mako

Famous for their speed, the Shortfin Mako can travel twenty-two to forty to miles per hour. This shark species is also known for traveling long distances, which can be as high as 1400 miles per month. The average height of the shortfin Mako is over 10 ft long and it is often found around the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean.

They are among the most popular shark species that fishing enthusiasts target for recreational fishing. These sharks have distinct coloring on their bodies, including indigo blue and dark purple on the top, white colored bottom and silver on their sides.

Chapter 4: Shark Tooth Hunting – What is it all about

Just like combing through sand in search of seashells and other treasure found on the beach, shark teeth are also quite common items that wash up on the shore and are free for the taking. The best part about collecting shark teeth is that you will not even need a metal detector to look for them. Sharks have been swilling the ocean waters for centuries. Whenever a shark's life is about to end, most of its body either disintegrates in the ocean water or is eaten by other creatures.

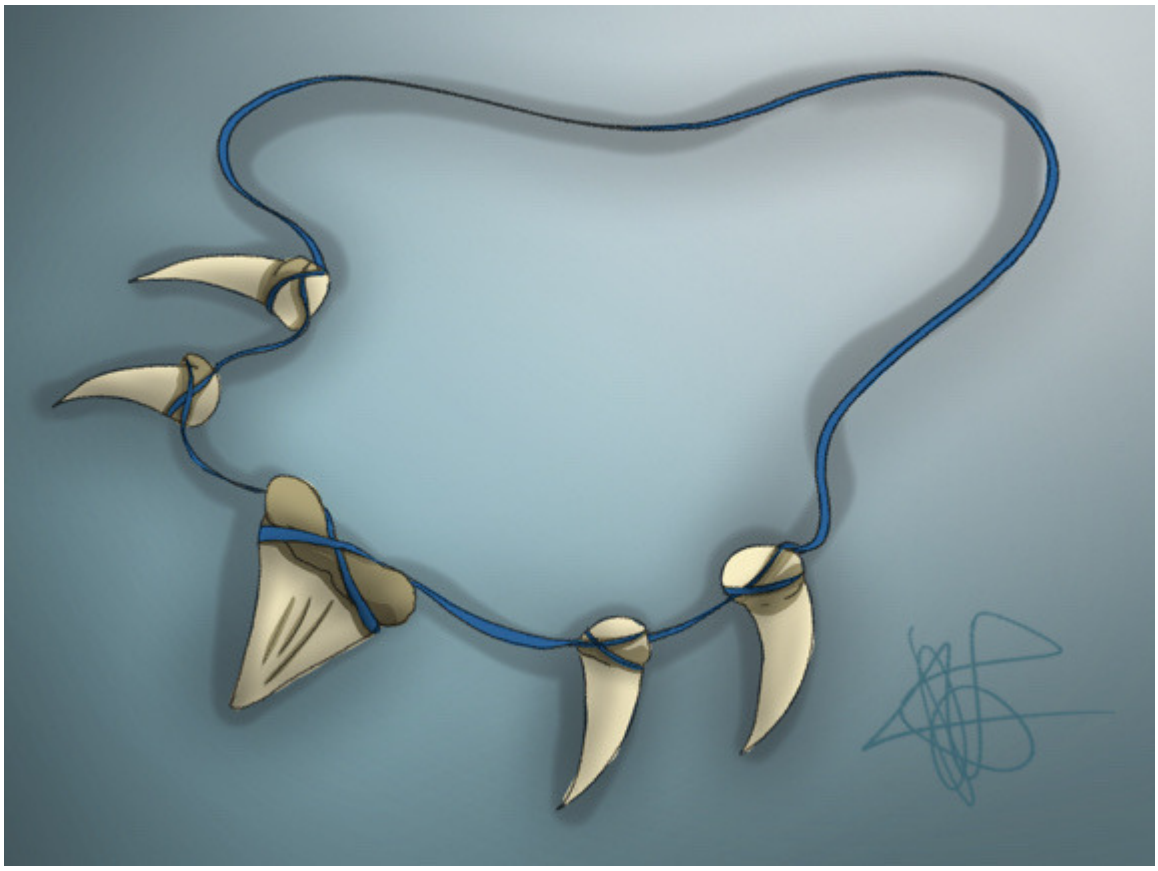
However, this creature's teeth still remain, and they fossilize after thousands of years. Over time, shark teeth get moved around and stirred up in the ocean, until one day they show up in the shorelines along with seashells. These teeth entice beach combers to hunt for these treasures. When hunting for shark teeth for the first time, you will notice that these teeth are not as large as you expected. Of course, the size of each tooth may vary, but they will stay in the same size range.

This means that you will essentially be looking for a triangle, roughly around 1/8 to ¾ inches or slightly larger; however, nothing too imposing and large. It is also worth keeping in mind that shark teeth are available in a wide range of colors, which usually depend on the type of sediment they are fossilized in. Most likely, however, the teeth are quite dark in color, usually black and slightly glossy when exposed to light.

Why do People Hunt for Shark Teeth

If you have been to the beach, there is a high likelihood that you noticed little shops spread along the boardwalks. You may even have visited them at some point for a beach towel or a bottle of sunscreen. You will find different types of crafts and ocean trinkets in these shops and if you take a close look in

these shops, you may find items like shark tooth necklaces. Who knows, you may even have purchased a shark tooth necklace before without knowing that you were wearing the shark teeth you found on the beach.



This is among one of the reasons why shark tooth hunting is a popular pastime among beach goers. Shark tooth hunting can either be a calm walk along sandy beaches or a thrilling game that kids and adults will love. Some people just love seeing the kind of teeth they will find to learn about the shark species it came from. Meanwhile, there are others who just love collecting teeth for making different crafts such as jewelry, gifts for friends and family, artwork, or shark tooth themed memorabilia that they can sell.

If you do not have enough experience in shark tooth hunting, then you may not be aware that these objects are a lot more than simple teeth. They are fossils. As mentioned, sharks have been around for millions of years and whenever this creature dies, its cartilage disintegrates, leaving only the teeth behind. More often than not the teeth make their way down to the bottom of the ocean, after which they get covered in sandy sediment.

The sediment fends off destructive bacteria and oxygen from damaging the tooth, because of which the teeth fossilize for thousands of years. It is a major reason most of the shark teeth people collect are not white. Instead, they are usually black, brown or grey. The tooth takes in minerals from the sediment, which slowly replaces the enamel and dentine making up the tooth, resulting in a fossil. Shark teeth can

be quite valuable, like several other types of fossils. So, they are often readily traded, sold and bought by collectors and enthusiasts.

The giant megalodon shark's tooth is arguably the most valuable one out there. Why? Because this shark used to be so big that it makes the great white seem like an average goldfish. The size of the great white sharks these days varies from seven to twenty feet. The megalodon sharks, on the other hand, had an average size of sixty feet, towering every other shark specie in comparison.

This shark specie's tooth usually ranges in size (ninety to one hundred and eighty mm) and its weight is over a pound. Locating megalodon tooth can be a fantastic find and anything above four inches is quite valuable and rare. Believe it or not, there is an incredibly high demand for these teeth and some people are even willing to pay thousands of dollars, depending on the location where you unearthed the teeth and their size.

While the teeth are quite well preserved, some of them can have some cracks and chips from undersea coral and rocks. So, a major reason many people gather shark teeth is because of their incredible monetary value. You will find thousands of websites devoted to selling these collectibles. Another reason shark tooth hunting is popular is the chance of unearthing a tooth belonging to a prehistoric shark species that could be millions of years old.

Different Types of Shark Teeth

There are four different shark teeth types out there and the type of teeth a shark has mainly depends on their diet.

Dense Flattened Teeth

These teeth are usually present in sharks living at the bottom of the oceans, like nurse sharks. The main reason for this is that bottom dwelling sharks usually feed on crustaceans, turtles and crabs. Flattened teeth are especially helpful for opening shells.

Triangular Upper Teeth and Pointed Lower Teeth

These types of teeth are quite effective when it comes to biting large prey like whales, dolphins and seals. This combination of teeth tends to have serrated edges used for cutting prey into tiny pieces, ensuring they are easy to swallow. Shark species that usually have these teeth are the oceanic white tips and the great white shark. Both are quite notorious for their deadly attacks on humans.

Needle like Teeth

As the name suggests, these teeth are quite long and sharp. Needle like teeth are especially useful for gripping medium or small sized fish, sharks or squid. The sharp and long teeth make it easy to grab sea creatures with incredibly narrow bodies. The shark species that have these sets of teeth include bull sharks. These sharks are famous for their ability to survive in lakes, rivers and other freshwater habitats.

Non-Functional Teeth

These types of teeth are found in megamouth sharks, whale sharks, basking sharks and other filter feeding sharks. All of these species mainly feed on small organisms like plankton. Surprisingly, filter

feeder sharks do not use their teeth when eating, which is why they are referred to as nonfunctional teeth.

Instead, the creatures swim towards their target with their mouths wide open, sucking in small organisms in the process. Once the prey is in their mouth, the water is filtered out and the prey gets swallowed. Sharks with nonfunctional teeth are considered harmless, despite their gigantic size.

Chapter 5: Shark Tooth Hunting Tip for First Timers

Do you love the great outdoors and like going to the beach? If so, hunting for shark teeth is a fun way to spend time there as it will allow you to explore different parts of the beach while keeping you occupied. There is rarely a dull moment when hunting for shark teeth, which is why thousands of people perform this activity.

If you are hunting for shark teeth for the first time, it would be best to start by keeping an eye out for anything small, sharp and triangular along the beach's tide line. New teeth are generally white while older ones are black and are usually more common as they become fossilized with time. The thinner triangles have wide bases attached to them and these triangles tend to have varying shapes.

In some cases, shark teeth tend to have curved and serrated edges, depending on where they were located in the creature's mouth. While some people are lucky enough to find shark teeth by merely looking around the sand, you really have to sift and dig to increase the chances of finding more teeth. A sifter may be able to help you dig through the sand quickly and efficiently and is a significantly better option than using your fingers.

Where and When to Hunt

You will find shark teeth wherever there are sharks present. While some beaches are quite famous for having loads of shark teeth, you can find them on almost any beach. Topsail Beach in North Carolina is a popular shark tooth spot in the East Coast. A major part of shark teeth hunting is knowing the right place and time to look.

Basically, it's ideal to start looking for shark teeth whenever the ocean floor experiences some movement. For instance, there could be some dredging nearby or a heavy tide. Tide pools and sandbars are also an excellent place to search because the water over there moves constantly.

Some think that there is a high likelihood of finding shark teeth around and during full moon cycles, mainly because the tide's pull is stronger. However, there is very little evidence to suggest whether this is true.

Remember, shark tooth hunting requires a great deal of patience, and you may not even find one during some trips. But, considering that a shark typically produces around twenty-five thousand teeth in its lifetime, there are plenty of them to find.

Tips for Shark Tooth Hunting Success

For many people, the mere thrill of discovering a shark tooth is that they were the first person to see and hold it. Having such a connection with something further drives people's fascination with this activity. Mentioned below are some tried and tested tips to help you find shark tooth successfully.

Hunt at a Fossiliferous Beach

An excellent place to begin your hunt for shark teeth would be a place that experiences dredging along with beach renourishment. These processes vacuum up a great deal of fossil rich sediment and sand from the floor of the ocean. Also, once you choose a beach to look for shark teeth, take some time to

know it. When you go to a beach for the first time, consider going at a low tide. Doing so can get you the broadest possible scope.

Experts believe that beaches change after every 12 hours, especially during the hurricane seasons, as they shake things up quite well. That said, you can still find fossils throughout the year.

Look for Shell Piles

The ocean tends to sort things according to density and size. It collects and deposits item on the shore, which increases your chances of finding fossils. These fossils usually show up in piles of gravel or shell. If you are lucky enough to find one, there is a good chance that you will find more. If you do not see any piles, consider checking the strand lines. For those wondering, a strand line is where the ocean drops debris and organic material at high tide.

Keep an Eye Out for Jet Black Items

Color is arguably the biggest indicator of finding fossils. Remember, fossilized shark teeth are usually dark grey or black in color. This is because of the phosphate that forms around the shark's bone.

While the fossils can also get bleached because of the sun or possibly take on other colors, most of them are black. White shark teeth are quite rare as there plenty of fossilized teeth deposited by the oceans. These teeth belong to sharks that existed millions of years ago.

Found at Topsail Beach

Do not Set Your Expectations Too High

One of the reasons why many people give up their pursuit of shark teeth is that they set their expectations too high. Sure, it is good to be ambitious, but expecting to find a megalodon's shark teeth all the time isn't a good idea. Getting used to finding smaller shark teeth is the perfect way to set your expectations low and will keep you interested in this fun activity.

It is also worth keeping in mind that not all shark teeth look like the ones belonging to the great white or the megalodon. In fact, the majority of them are slender, long and in some cases, T-shaped. These teeth usually come from lemon, sand tiger or reef sharks. Some of them could be fragmented as well, so avoid limiting yourself to looking for triangular shaped teeth only.

Look for other Fossils too

Limiting yourself to only searching shark teeth means that you will be ignoring more than eighty percent of the fossils present n the beach. More often than not, beaches deposit fossils from a wide range of terrestrial and marine mammals along with other creatures like the saber-toothed tiger.

Identify Your Finds

Once you spend time collecting shark teeth, make sure to look them up online and check which sharks they belonged too. While there are plenty of online resources for shark tooth identification, but two, in particular, are quite handy. The first one is from the University of Florida Museum and it offers detailed, technical descriptions. Meanwhile, the second one from the Reef Quest Centre for Shark Research is simpler and offers an easy to understand visual guide for shark teeth identification.

Chapter 6: Difference between Modern and Fossilized Shark Teeth

Sharks shed thousands of teeth during their lifetime. Once these teeth sink into the sea floor, sediment covers them up quickly. As mentioned earlier, the sediment helps protect the shark teeth from abrasion, weathering, along with scavenging, which may happen if they were in open currents and water. Burial in the sediments also restricts the teeth's exposure to bacteria and oxygen, two things that cause decay.

The fossilization procedure is quite slow and usually takes place in a period of thousand years or more. As far as shark teeth are concerned, they are essentially preserved by a process called permineralization, which happens once water seeps through sediments and the teeth. The water carries a wide range of minerals that enter the teeth's open pore spaces. Calcite and silica are arguably the most common minerals that enter the teeth, but there are other minerals that may be deposited in as well.

The color of the shark teeth you find is based on the minerals inside it. These colors range from grey/blue to black or red/orange to green etc.

Why are Shark Teeth Available in Different Colors?

Shark teeth get their color because of the minerals present in the sediments surrounding them. As mentioned earlier, the teeth fossilize because of a process known as permineralization. Water enters in the sediments covering the teeth, transporting minerals inside the sediment into the teeth, resulting in fossilization. Every mineral has a different color as they react with oxygen.

For instance, once iron starts to oxidize, it starts rusting and usually turns reddish brown in color. The same thing can happen to shark teeth and other fossils.

Where Can You Find Fossilized Shark Teeth?

Generally, fossils are present in unconsolidated sediments or sedimentary rocks. These rocks form because of the compression of clays, silts, mid, sands and other loose sediments over thousands, if not millions of years.

You will mostly find fossil shark teeth in marine derived sedimentary rocks, which means that said sediments were initially underwater. Climate changes over the years have caused oceans to rise and fall, which means that the sediments that were initially underwater more than ten thousand years ago, could be present on dry land currently.

It is worth keeping mind, however, that not all marine sediments will have a vast number of teeth. Areas that used to be shallow marine environments initially usually have more teeth. This is mainly because they used to have more sharks living there and they were most likely forced to come to these areas in search of cover and food. Shark teeth hunting can be quite hit or miss, but searching areas where others found teeth before would be a good start.

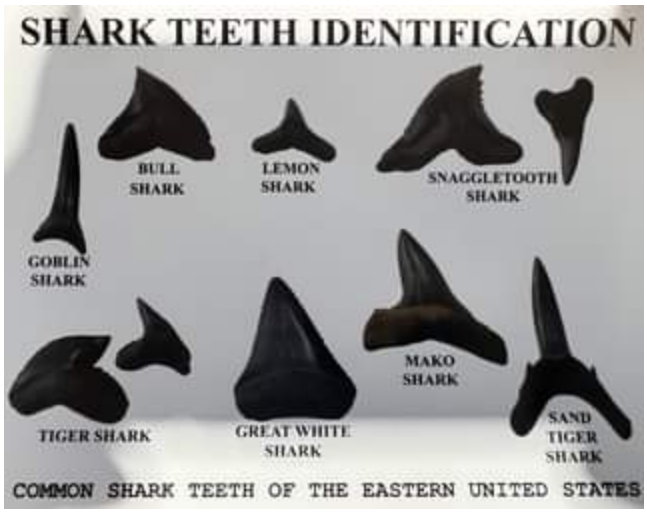
How to Tell the Difference between Recent and Fossilized Shark Teeth

While there are a variety of ways to determine whether a shark tooth is recent or modern, the time and efficiency of each method can vary significantly. This is why it would be best to look for color as an indicator of the shark tooth's age. Grey, brown or black teeth are usually fossilized but not all the time.

Modern shark teeth on the other hand usually have a white colored root and crown. In some instances, however, fossil teeth tend to have a white colored crown, but if you take a closer look their root is often beige or dark grey in color.

Another helpful method for determining whether a shark tooth is fossilized or modern is by learning about the location where you found it from. If you found it inside a creek just fifty miles from the closest ocean, it would be fair to say that the tooth is fossilized.

Identifying shark teeth by their species can also be helpful. While most of the species existing currently have been around for over four to five million years, many of the older shark teeth are from extinct species that are not alive anymore.



Determining the Age of Shark Teeth

Determining the age of sediments that covered the shark tooth is another effective way to learn how old shark teeth are. This can be done with the help of geological maps. Fortunately, most states have their own geological map, and it shows where you can find sediments of different ages. If you are not able to find a geological map, you can determine how old sediments are by using the fossils present in them.

Remember, sharks are not the best indicators when it comes to geologic age. This is because the evolution of these creatures is a slow process. Most of the species present in the oceans these days have been around for over four to five million years. Fossils from other creatures including reptiles, invertebrates, birds and mammals are significantly better indicators for determining age due to their fast evolution.

If you find other fossil types in associated sediments, consider keeping them as they could be valuable for determining the age of the locality.

Is it Difficult to Determine Shark Species by their Tooth?

There are several aspects that make the identification of shark species quite complex. Since most of the teeth people find are scattered and mixed, it causes a great deal of confusion. In most cases, sharks tend to exhibit dignathic heterodonty, meaning that their lower and upper teeth are quite different morphologically. This is especially apparent in snaggle toothed sharks.

Shark teeth are also different in regard to their positioning in the jaw. These creatures have different sizes of teeth. For instance, the parasymphseal teeth (present between the right and left portions of their jaw and are quite small), anterior teeth (the largest set of teeth in a shark's jaws, sitting near the midline), intermediate/symphseal teeth (these are present between the lateral and anterior teeth and are small in size), and finally, lateral teeth (these get smaller towards the jaw's outer edges.) All of these teeth vary in curvature, size and shape, depending on their position.

A shark's age can also play a massive aspect in the morphology of its teeth. Several species tend to adjust their diet with age and the shape and size of their tooth can change accordingly, reflecting their

eating habits. Changes like these can often result in the loss or gain of cusplets, serrations, narrowing or broadening of the crown, along with the tooth's overall size.

It is also important to consider sexual dimorphism when trying to identify shark teeth. Males and females of different species exhibit various differences in the size and shape of their teeth. This is especially true with females as they exhibit slightly small or narrower teeth.

Finally, pathologic or abnormal teeth can distort a regular tooth into an unrecognizable shape. Pinched or wrinkled edges, cusplets, missing serrations, bifurcated or twisted crowns and other similar things can make the identification procedure quite complicated.

Chapter 6: How to Find Megalodon Teeth at the Beach

The megalodon shark, also called the Otudus megalodon is the largest shark species to ever exist. However, these predators have been extinct since more than four million years and their massive teeth are the best indicator of their probable size. Every continent except Antarctica has fossilized teeth, so no matter where you are, there is a good chance you would find them at sea, beach, rivers or streams. Some locations have a higher likelihood of having giant shark teeth compared to others.

Searching for Megalodon Shark Teeth

Searching for a megalodon shark's teeth requires knowing where and most importantly, how to look for them. Ocean shores, riverbeds and almost any shallow water area near the coast would be ideal for starting your search. All you need is a sifting screen and a small shovel to sift and dig through sediments in hopes of finding a megalodon shark's teeth.

Once you start your search, gather as much sediment and sand in your filtering screen as possible. Also, make sure you keep the sifting screen at water level to increase your chances of finding a megalodon shark's teeth. Remember, this process can be quite time consuming, and you may not find what you are looking for in the first few tries. You will need to be persistent and spend hours to have any chance of finding megalodon shark teeth or any fossil whatsoever.

What is the Best Time to Conduct Your Search

Once you choose the beach you plan to conduct your search in, consider the ideal time to start hunting. If possible, head out after a storm whenever it is safe. Why? Because rough seas and storms expose layers that were previously buried underwater. These layers can deliver new and large megalodon teeth. Additionally, the authorities often top up beaches with sand they dredged from other channels to ensure they are clear for shipping.

This can be an excellent opportunity to find new teeth, which is why you must fully utilize the opportunity and get ahead of the game, whenever unsearched, fossil rich and fresh sand is deposited on the beach. In some cases, you may not always be able to visit when these circumstances happen, but you can still improve your chances of finding megalodon shark teeth by timing your visit.

For instance, going to a popular location early on in the day could mean that you may be the first person to find what was delivered during the nighttime. It would also be a good idea to conduct your search during wintertime as the beaches tend to be quieter, instead of summers when they are quite busy. If everything else fails, check your beach's tide tables and plan your visit accordingly.

When you are visiting a beach for the first time, visiting at low tide would be a wise choice. Doing so would give you the most expansive area of the exposed beach for conducting your search. As you gain experience, you will eventually be able to check high tide lines to see what they deposited. This will require you to time your visit for an hour after the tide turned to ensure you can perform your search while the waves are receding.

Chapter 7: Important Equipment that Every Shark Tooth Hunter Must Carry

Shark tooth hunting can be an incredibly fun activity but can feel quite tedious if you do not have the right tools. Mentioned below is a list of tools that everyone hunting for shark teeth must carry.

Sand Rake

You can dig up massive amounts of sediment and sand by using a high-quality sand flea rake. Consider getting one that is about sixteen inches wide and has an anodized aluminum build. This material is durable and does not get affected by the salty ocean environment easily. A tool like this can make the act of doffing a walk in the park, especially because of its serrated edge.

In most cases, other tools tend to be quite blunt and require a great deal of force when digging. Also, make sure that the handle design of the rake you choose is ergonomic. Curved handles are easier on the wrist and make sure you do not have to bend when turning the sand or sediment.

Sifter

Going through all of the sediment present in the water is impossible, especially if you are not using a high-quality sifter. Floating sifters are capable of disposing off irrelevant sediment from its mesh quite quickly, making it easy for you to find fossils. Once you find shark teeth, you can put them in the plastic container and continue looking for more.

Sand Dipper

The sand dipper is a portable, versatile and rugged tool that also serves as a hiking pole. Checking the sand deep under the sea can be quite challenging and takes a lot of time. Instead of diving down to sample sediments, the sand dipper allows you to reach quite deep (almost 60 to 65 inches.)

Some sand dippers also adjustable, allowing you to set their desired length. These tools are available in a variety of materials, but it would be best to get one made out of stainless steel as the material is lightweight and weather proof, ideal for the beach.

Mesh Bags

The beach has loads and loads of treasure if you look hard enough. You will find, seashells, shark teeth, calcified seahorses, pebbles and numerous other artifacts. If you spend a day searching for these items, there is a good chance that you will have collected a lot of interesting stuff by the time you get done. But where will you keep all of it? Well, a set of high-quality mesh bags will come in handy.

Tips to Choose the Right Tools for Shark Teeth Hunting

Whether you are going for shark teeth hunting for the first time or have some experience doing it, having the right tools is vital. Sure, you will find plenty of tools in stores, but they may not be the best because of their material, size, durability and other aspects. Here are some tips to choose the right ones:

Portable and Lightweight

Shark tooth hunting is a time-consuming activity and carrying heavy rakes or shovels can make your tired pretty quickly. What is more, you have to carry several essentials when you are out on the beach, so the last thing you need is a bunch of tools that you have to drag around.

This is why it would be best to get portable and lightweight tools that you can easily pack in your bag. It will allow you to move around quickly without getting tired, ensuring you do not feel burned out just an hour into your shark teeth hunting adventure.

Ergonomic

The best tools are those that do not add extra stress to your body. So, grips that fit well in your hands or rods that prevent you from bending your back too much are always welcome. Sure, you may have to pay a few extra bucks for such thoughtful designs, but they would definitely be worth the investment.

Rust Proof

The beach can be an incredibly pleasant place to go, but it is not the best for metals. Low quality metals can become quite rusty at the beach because of the salty air and water over there. This is why it would be best to invest in rust proof tools to ensure they remain functional for a long time. Also, no matter how durable your tools are, always dry and rinse them before storing them to keep them in excellent condition.

Carry a Proper Set of Gear

First timers often make the mistake of not packing the right gear for their shark teeth hunting trip. This leads to wasted time as you may not be able to find the fossilized shark teeth for which you were searching. So, while a scoop and rake are vital for digging up the send and sediment, you will also need to carry a sieve for sorting through the mix. Once you find the shark teeth, you will also need to keep them inside a pouch or container.

Additionally, it is difficult to walk around the seabed or send with bare feet, which is why putting on a pair of comfortable shoes would be idea. Other things that you may need to keep for your trip to the seaside includes towels, extra shirts, a duffel bag, sun glasses, sunscreen and a first aid kit.

Chapter 8: Interesting Shark Teeth Facts You May Not Know About

If there is one thing that people know about shark is that their teeth are incredibly sharp. What is most interesting about these creatures is that they their teeth are vital when it comes to hunting prey and can help experts identify different species from millions of years ago or present day.

Sharks Have Growing Teeth and Working Teeth

A great white shark can have up to fifty teeth during at one point in its life and more than three hundred teeth in various stages of development. When these teeth fall out, they have to be replaced quickly. Working shark teeth are used actively while the developing or growing teeth are present behind them, waiting to replace working teeth when they fall out.

Shark Teeth are not as Strong Compared to Human Teeth

Surprisingly shark teeth are not as durable compared to human teeth. It is a major reason you can easily find them on beaches and oceans across the globe. Once these teeth fall off, other teeth replace them in different development stages. What is more, shark teeth tend to break quite easily because they do not have any roots and some teeth last for as little as a week, after which the growing teeth replace them.

The teeth present behind the broken teeth move forward just like a massive conveyor belt. Despite having week, rootless teeth, however, sharks have incredibly strong jaws that make them dangerous creatures with a lethal bite.

The Megalodon Shark's Teeth Have the Highest Value

Out of all the shark teeth present in beaches and oceans across the globe, the most coveted teeth belong to the megalodon species. A single megalodon tooth is about 7.1 inches or 180 millimeters long and is arguably the largest among other shark species.

The megalodon shark used to exist more than four million years ago and was considered one of the largest and most dangerous predators to ever exist. Sadly, scientists are not sure of the average size of these creatures. Some think that the average height of this shark species was around thirty-five feet while others thing it was more.

While large megalodon teeth are quite hard to find, but smaller ones that are about three to five inches long can be easily found if you spend some time looking for them at the beach. The color of these teeth is usually brown, black or dark grey because of the sediment they are covered in. Some teeth also have other colors, and their value is higher because of their rarity.

Commonly, these teeth are present in certain parts of North America like South and North Carolina and Florida. However, you will also find these teeth in other continents, with Antarctica being the only exception.

Shark Teeth are usually found In Sedimentary Rocks

This fact is true for almost all types of fossils. Scientists closely study the sediment and teeth to learn about the teeth's age and the time period they came from. In most cases, these teeth are found between the tertiary and upper cretaceous periods.

Sharks Often Go Through Thousands of Teeth during their Lifetime

Whenever a shark bites its prey, its teeth often become loose and fall off into the ocean. Unlike many other creatures, shark teeth are replaced by the ones behind them, and it does not take too much time for this process to happen (usually 24 hours).

Because of the large number of teeth sharks tend to go through during their life, finding them can be quite easy and is a major reason why shark tooth hunting is a popular pastime.

Scientists Used Shark Teeth to Learn About their Species

More often than not, fossilized shark teeth belong to shark species that scientists want to study. Ancient sharks often date back to more than four million years ago. People living in the Renaissance period believe that shark teeth came from the sky, and they belonged to tongues of snakes and dragons, which is why many called them “tongue stone.”

In the early days, people used shark teeth as a remedy for toxins and potions and some even made pendants out of them to steer clear from bad luck.

People in America and Oceania Used these Teeth as Tools

The native people of Oceania and America often used shark teeth as daggers, clubs and other tools. Some even used them as weapons and for preparing food. Edged weapons, in particular, used shark teeth and were considered quite dangerous. Residents of the Easter Island also used shark teeth for inscribing on rocks and walls.

Frequently Asked Questions about Shark Teeth

How Much are Shark Teeth Worth?

Different things determine the value of shark teeth. Since these teeth are present in different sizes, colors, shapes and belong to different species, their value is set accordingly. Some teeth sell for one dollar while other ones may sell for thousands of dollars.

Are Shark Teeth Considered Rare?

Sharks often go through more than thirty-five thousand teeth during their lifetime and they have an incredibly high tooth turnover rate. While these are not necessarily rare, certain shark species have large teeth, like the megalodon shark.

How Many Teeth Do Sharks Usually Lose?

Some shark species have around three thousand teeth at a time, and they lose one hundred out of them per day. During the course of their life, sharks have a turnover of over thirty-five thousand teeth.

What are Some Rare Shark Teeth One Should look for?

The teeth of Parotodus Benedini or the Megalodon shark are considered quite rare and are quite valuable.

How Can You Tell if a Shark Teeth is recent or old?

Similar to a large number of fossils across the globe, the best way to learn about a fossil's age is to determine the sediment they are found from.

Epilogue

Shark teeth hunting has become an incredibly popular activity among beach goers and shark tooth enthusiasts. Since an individual shark can shed a hundred teeth a day, there are plenty of teeth to find in beaches everywhere. If you are planning to go shark teeth hunting, consider the advice and tips we discussed in this piece to ensure you are well-prepared and can find success in your first trip.