



Cooper River, Charleston, South Carolina

Cold water, fast current and minimal visibility. Sound appealing? Well, it is for fossil hunters wanting to bag the toothy remains of the giant megalodon shark. Still with us? Divers scour Cooper River in southeast South Carolina for remains of the creature which roamed the ocean millions of years ago. But shark teeth aren't the only treasures waiting to be discovered.

Depths to: 80 feet (24 m) but usually 12-35 feet (4-11 m)

Visibility: Up to 10 feet (3 m)

Water temperature: 40-45 degrees Fahrenheit (5-7 degrees Celsius) in the winter when visibility is best and up to 90 F (32 C) in late summer.

Marine life: Fossils including shark teeth the size of your hand is how the dive area is known best. Some teeth date back 7 million years. You'll also find whale ribs, American Indian pottery, spear and arrow tips, tusks from a variety of animals including saber tooth tigers, mastodon molars and antique bottles.

Fees: Check with area dive and charter operators. They include Freedom At Depth Diving, (843) 746-9896; Deep South Rivers, (803) 428-3884; Cooper River Diving, (843) 572-0459; Charleston Scuba, (843) 763-3483; and Capt. Tom McMillan's A Day on the Cooper River, (843) 693-8485.

On-site amenities: For topside accommodations and diversions, visit the Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Bureau at www.charlestoncvb.com.

More info: For the Cooper River Underwater Heritage Trail, contact the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, (843) 762-6105 or visit http://www.cas.sc.edu/sciaa/mrd/sdamp_mht.html. Open: Year-round.

Getting there: The major interstate leading into Charleston is I-26. It intersects with I-95 which connects North Carolina and Georgia.

<http://www.dtmag.com/dive-usa/locations/CooperRiverSC.html>



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