



**DESERT INSTITUTE**  
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL  
PARK ASSOCIATION

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55922 Twentynine Palms Highway,  
Yucca Valley, 92284

## FOSSILS OF THE MARBLE MOUNTAINS

**FIELD CLASS / SPRING 2024 / INSTRUCTOR: ALESSANDRO GRIPPO**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 27TH, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM**

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Marble Mountains are a rather small mountain range located in one of the harshest, driest parts of the Mojave Desert, in southeastern California near the towns of Chambless and Cadiz. What makes the Marble Mountains especially attractive to paleontologists is the comparatively rich Cambrian fossil biota, dominated by one of the earliest known groups of arthropods, trilobites. Slather on the sunscreen and join Alessandro for this one-day field class right off historic Route 66 in the middle of the Mojave.

### PROGRAM AGENDA

We'll meet at Roy's Café and Gas station in Amboy at 9am. We will then caravan to a private property within the Marble Mountain range. We'll start with a brief introduction to the geology of the area, and will set out on a short hike to explore the fossil biota in the area. We will have a brief in-field lunch break, and the class will end by 2pm.

### MEETING LOCATION

Roy's Cafe & Gas Station, 87520 National Trails Hwy, Amboy, CA 92304

*Please arrive on time; we start classes promptly, and in the case of hikes or other classes on the go, we cannot wait for students who arrive late.*

### REQUIRED PREPARATION

**Waiver:** All participants must complete the [participation waiver](#) at least 24 hours before a class begins. *Failure to do so may forfeit your right to participate.*

**Park Pass (\$30 per vehicle):** For classes inside Joshua Tree National Park, participants are now required to purchase a [park pass](#). You can purchase a park pass [online](#), or pay at a park entrance. If you have an existing pass, you may use that!

## ACTIVITY LEVEL

**Easy** Participants can expect to walk up to 1 mile over uneven, rocky terrain. Please contact us if you have questions about your ability to participate.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- First aid and emergency supplies for the group

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Admission to Joshua Tree National Park
- Meals, Lodging, or Transportation

## WHAT TO BRING

### The essentials for all field courses:

- Water, between 3 and 4 liters per person for a full day outing
- Food and snacks, easily packed and eaten in the field (please leave no trace)
- Close-toed athletic shoes or hiking boots; no sandals, not even hiking sandals!
- Sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sunscreen; light-colored long-sleeved shirts are recommended and very effective on hot days
- Warm layers for cooler mornings/evenings (it can be surprisingly cold!)
- Backpack to carry food, water, and any personal items you need for the day

### Required for this course:

- Compass/GPS device
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Field guides

## GET TO KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Alessandro has done research and taught geology, oceanography, stratigraphy, environmental geology and field classes at Santa Monica College and several California State University campuses. Alessandro has a keen interest for the geology of the American southwest and loves being out there exploring, learning, and sharing his passion for Earth and its history. Alessandro also worked in the oil industry between his M.S. and his Ph.D., was a fellow faculty member at NASA-JPL for one year, and brought his students from Catalina Island to Nevada, from the Salton Sea to northern California. His interests and study, together with his passion for photography took him throughout Europe and the Americas looking for geological features.

## *SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY*

Gas/charging stations are far and few between in the Amboy area; please begin your journey with a full tank/charge. There is little to no cell service in Amboy and the surrounding areas. Please plan ahead and check traffic conditions/road closures in the area the day before if you are driving from LA. Please make sure you check weather conditions and dress accordingly.



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## FAQ+ \_

### WHO DO I CONTACT IF I AM RUNNING LATE?

Desert Institute Manager Benny Erdahl: **949-241-9693**  
or Education Director Dr. Justin Lenzi: **760-819-4714**

For classes meeting inside the park, it can take up to 45 minutes to go through an entrance gate on weekends after 9am (though 15-20 minutes is typical). Please allot time to park, as parking lots tend to be congested between 10am and 4p in the busy season. ***There is no cell service in the park***, please plan accordingly.

### WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL?

Desert Institute will provide a full refund if we are notified more than 14 days in advance. We are unable to process refunds for *any* cancellations less than 14 days in advance.

### DOES DESERT INSTITUTE CANCEL ACTIVITIES FOR WEATHER OR LOW ENROLLMENT?

If we do not meet our minimum of 6 registered participants for any given activity, we will likely cancel the activity with at least 48+ hours notice.

*Desert Institute runs classes rain or shine*, with the exception of astrophotography classes, which require mostly clear skies in order to be successful.

We recommend that you purchase travel insurance, as we are unable to reimburse for expenses you incur due to a canceled class, such as airfare and hotel.

### WHAT IF I FORGOT SOMETHING I NEED?

Our visitor centers and park stores are stocked with amazing essentials for your adventure. Preview or purchase items from our [online shop](#); we carry [hats](#), [shirts](#), bandanas, water bottles, notebooks, [maps](#), [books](#). And more!

### CAN I BRING MY KIDS? MY SPOUSE? PETS?

Only registered participants may attend Desert Institute activities (unless noted in the activity description). If this is a kid-friendly activity, please make sure your child(ren) are registered and meet the age requirements.

As much as we love pets, we don't allow them in the field with any of our activities.

