

MEDIA ALERT! Press/Media Conference **Thursday, May 27, 10 a.m., Peoria Riverfront Museum, “T. rex: The Ultimate Predator” exhibition;** Q&A with American Museum of Natural History Resident Research Assoc. Akinobu Watanabe, PhD; CEFCU President & CEO Matt Mamer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Ferocious, Feathered and First Time on the Road, “T. rex: The Ultimate Predator” Debuts on its Worldwide Tour at Peoria Riverfront Museum May 29

PEORIA, Ill. – Ferocious, feathered and for the first time on the road, “T. rex: The Ultimate Predator,” presented by CEFCU, debuts on its worldwide tour at the Peoria Riverfront Museum, May 29. The exhibition, arriving from its creator, the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, presents the most scientifically accurate model of Tyrannosaurus rex to date, including plumage, as well as life-size models of other members of the tyrannosaur family tree.

"How exciting! For the first time, Peoria is the launching point for a major international traveling exhibition tour and with one of the most popular museum subjects of all-time researched by the same museum that discovered the T. rex. ‘The Summer of T. rex’ at the museum is one of the cultural experiences young and old will recall for a lifetime," said Peoria Riverfront Museum President & CEO John Morris.

Full-scale feathered models of the world’s most iconic dinosaur will be on display, from a hatchling that resembles a fluffy turkey poult to a feather-covered juvenile to a city-bus-sized adult T. rex with feather patches. While the mega-predator was capable of crushing prey with a 7,800-pound bite force, research finds that it was also very smart and sensitive.

“In the last 30 years, we’ve seen a huge increase in both the number of tyrannosaur fossil discoveries as well as the availability of technology that lets us explore complex questions about these charismatic animals,” said paleontologist Mark Norell, PhD, division chair and Macaulay Curator, American Museum of Natural History. “I never would have imagined that one day we’d be able to look at the shape of T. rex’s brain, analyze the tiny daily growth lines on their massive teeth to determine how quickly they put on weight, or use advanced biomechanical modeling to figure out the force of its bite.”

Along with T. rex, the exhibition showcases other full-size tyrannosaurs, including the earliest, the Proceratosaurus bradleyi, and Dilong paradoxus with fossilized feathers, discovered in China by Norell and his colleagues.

T. rex plays. The exhibition’s interactive features give visitors of all ages many options for fun encounters, such as the “roar mixer” that uses selected animal sounds to recreate a T. rex roar, a shadow theater that projects below an adult T. rex skeleton making it come to life, and a life-sized animation of T. rex that responds to visitors’ movements in its Cretaceous environment.

(For the record, T. rex arrived during the late Cretaceous period, millions of years after the Jurassic period, made famous by the movie series, which we’ll be showing on the giant screen.)

Peoria Riverfront Museum features a “Summer of T. rex” programming that takes T. rex into the rest of the museum with Giant Screen Theater dinosaur films, including the full “Jurassic Park” series and the immersive documentary “Walking with Dinosaurs,” a special live planetarium show, a Dino Lab makers space open Saturdays, an art contest, a live lecture series and more.

Look out for Rexy, the museum’s special fledgling (human-sized) ambassador, who will take the story of T. rex into the Central Illinois community.

“T. rex: The Ultimate Predator” exhibition runs from May 29 through Sept. 6. The cost is \$18 for adults, \$17 for students and seniors 60+, and \$16 for youth 3 to 17; members get in free. Galleries and Dome Planetarium shows are included with admission. Giant Screen Theater experience is extra. The museum welcomes Blue Star Museum families, Museums for All, and public library pass holders.

The Peoria Riverfront Museum gratefully acknowledges “T. rex: The Ultimate Predator” exhibition presenter, CEFCU, with additional sponsorship provided by the Ransburg Family, Precision Planting, RLI and the Corporate Visionary Society Council. “T. rex: The Ultimate Predator” is organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York (amnh.org).

For more information about the exhibition, upcoming programs or membership, or to purchase exhibition or movie tickets or a membership, call 309.686.7000 or visit RiverfrontMuseum.org.

Peoria Riverfront Museum

The only multidisciplinary museum of its kind in the nation, the Peoria Riverfront Museum uses art, science, history and achievement to inspire confidence, lifelong learning, and talent. Since opening in 2012, the privately funded museum has provided more than one million experiences through major exhibitions, a permanent collection, interactive galleries, a dome planetarium, giant screen theater and educational programming including curricula-related student visits. The AAM-accredited, Smithsonian-affiliated private nonprofit museum is supported by more than 4,000 members and donors, and is housed in a county-owned LEED Gold-certified building on a campus overlooking the Illinois River.

American Museum of Natural History (amnh.org)

The American Museum of Natural History, founded in 1869, is one of the world’s preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. The Museum encompasses more than 40 permanent exhibition halls, including those in the Rose Center for Earth and Space and the Hayden Planetarium, as well as galleries for temporary exhibitions. The Museum’s scientists draw on a world-class permanent collection of more than 34 million specimens and artifacts, some of which are billions of years old, and on one of the largest natural history libraries in the world. Through its Richard Gilder Graduate School, the Museum grants the Ph.D. degree in Comparative Biology and the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree, the only such freestanding, degree-granting program at any museum in the United States. The Museum’s website, digital videos, and apps for mobile devices bring its collections, exhibitions, and educational programs to millions around the world. Visit amnh.org for more information.

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