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PaleoPalooza at the South Carolina State Museum

Experience a special day full of fossils, dinosaurs, natural history and more, June 17

COLUMBIA, S.C., June 8, 2017– The South Carolina State Museum will celebrate all things paleontology, Saturday, June 17 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Guests will get to meet a paleontologist, skype with scientists in the jungles of Panama, make their own fossils, see live birds of prey and more during this full day of natural history.

Guests will get a chance to meet paleontologist, Jun Ebersole, director of collections at the McWane Science Center in Birmingham, Alabama. Ebersole has spent the past 20 years studying the ancient history of the Southeastern United States and has published numerous articles on various fossil animals. Some of Ebersole’s recent projects include the description of new dinosaur species that were found in Alabama. Ebersole will share his experiences at two presentations during the day.

Jim Knight, former curator of natural history and director of collections at the South Carolina State Museum, has become involved with several projects that are focused on documenting herpetological (amphibians and reptile) diversity in the jungles of Panama and Ecuador. Knight has spent the last seven years traveling to Central America and will talk with guests via skype from Panama about one of those projects.

“Natural history is an important part of the museum’s four disciplines,” said Dave Cicimurri, curator of natural history at the State Museum. “We hope guests spend the entire day experiencing what it’s like to be a paleontologist and learning about the types of animals that live, or perhaps once lived, in South Carolina.”

Winged Ambassadors from Sharpsburg, GA, will be on hand with large birds of prey, including owls and hawks. Live flight demonstrations will take place twice during the day just outside the museum. Winged Ambassadors incorporates live animals into their educational programs, which focuses on exploring the life and habits of these fascinating birds.

Family fun education stations will be featured throughout the day. Kids can make their own fossil, excavate and reconstruct fossils just like a paleontologist, and draw their favorite extinct animal for a chance to win a cool prize.

PaleoPalooza is free with museum general admission or membership. As a special offer children 12 will also get to experience *Sea Monsters: A Prehistoric Adventure* in the BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina planetarium for free with a purchase of each child’s ticket to the museum’s blockbuster exhibit *Savage Ancient Seas*.

About the South Carolina State Museum: *As the state’s largest and most comprehensive museum, the South Carolina State Museum offers a unique, entertaining and educational experience to visitors throughout its 225,000 square foot facility located in the heart of downtown Columbia’s Congaree Vista. The State Museum is housed in one of its largest artifacts, an 1894 old textile mill full of character and charm. Guests can explore outer space in one of the largest planetariums in the Southeast, watch an interactive 4D movie and look through a vintage telescope in a one-of-a-kind observatory. These opportunities are all in addition to the four floors of South Carolina art, cultural history, natural history and science/technology. Visit scmuseum.org to learn more.*

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