



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Natural History Museum of Utah Marks its 50th Year with *Nature All Around Us* *Groundbreaking new exhibit invites visitors to connect and coexist with Utah's wondrous nature*

SALT LAKE CITY, Oct. 4, 2019 – Nature is thriving right under everyone's noses in Utah's cities and towns! The public has the opportunity to learn about the wild plants and animals that share their communities in a new immersive exhibit, *Nature All Around Us*, running Oct. 19, 2019 – May 25, 2020, at the [Natural History Museum of Utah](#) at the University of Utah's Rio Tinto Center, 301 Wakara Way, Salt Lake City.

Nature All Around Us features everything from live specimens to state-of-the-art digital integrations, including 3D mapped projections, a virtual bicycle ride, digital periscopes and multiple fun and challenging games for all ages. There are large-scale dioramas complete with a crawl-through tunnel beneath a park and pollinator costumes to put on and dance through giant flowers. The exhibit also highlights the work of local citizen scientists including Rebecca Ray, Utah's own internationally recognized arachnid identifier. Museum staff created, designed, and constructed *Nature All Around Us* over three years to mark the Museum's 50th anniversary.

"*Nature All Around Us* – the Museum's most hands-on exhibit to date – asks visitors to see familiar places with new eyes and provides opportunities to learn and practice the skills of a naturalist," said Lisa Thompson, exhibit developer and interpretive planner, Natural History Museum of Utah. "We hope to challenge the notion that urban and natural environments are separate or at odds by showing the many ways they are inextricably linked, and to encourage the public to learn about planning, designing and managing to nurture nature in their communities."

In fact, *Nature All Around Us* was developed with the advice of more than 50 local experts statewide including urban foresters, conservation biologists, community garden organizers, a river restoration designer and numerous scientists. A highlight of the Museum's 50th anniversary celebrations, the exhibition introduces visitors to the multiple rich ecosystems that thrive in communities throughout Utah and empowers them to discover the amazing biodiversity all around. With an introduction to observation tools including [iNaturalist](#), a citizen science app that helps individuals identify and document biodiversity, visitors will gain new skills, abilities and interest in citizen science—a legacy of *Nature All Around Us* long after the exhibition ends.

"Our new exhibit is based on the idea that we can make Utah an even better place in which to live by discovering, celebrating and conserving the nature we find in our own neighborhoods, open spaces and waterways," said Becky Menlove, interim executive director, Natural History Museum of Utah. "From concept to construction, our team has developed this incredibly engaging exhibit that will foster knowledge and appreciation for our beautiful state and teach how to gain scientific skills to conserve Utah's ecosystems."

In conjunction with the opening of the exhibit, the Museum invites the community to enjoy the [Nature All Around Us Opening Day Celebration](#) and meet some of the partners who helped bring the exhibit to life. Held on Oct. 19, from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., the event will offer opportunities to meet local scientists and learn about current



natural science research; experience nature talks on local conservation projects; get up-close with snakes, amphibians and bugs; make a bee hotel for the backyard and enjoy face-painting inspired by local animals.

The Natural History Museum of Utah opened its doors to the public in the George Thomas Building in President's Circle at the University of Utah in October of 1969 and moved to its current home at the Rio Tinto Center just above the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in 2011. As the state's designated museum of natural history, the Museum's mission is to illuminate the natural world and the place of humans within it, and it does so within the context of the extraordinary landscape of Utah. Since 2016, the Museum's exhibition team has been working on *Nature All Around Us*, which furthers the institution's broader goal of communicating the importance and value of the natural world around us.

The *Nature All Around Us* exhibition is part of a five-year Museum initiative with one simple premise – that by discovering the nature in our own neighborhoods, we can make Utah an even better place to live. Led by the Alternative Visions Fund, and their generous \$500,000 challenge grant, more than 600 supporters made contributions to help make *Nature All Around Us* possible. Funders ranged from first-time donors to long-time Museum champions – including tremendous support from the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, I.J. and Jeanné Wagner Charitable Foundation, My Good Fund and Rio Tinto Kennecott, among many others.

Entrance into *Nature All Around Us* and the opening day celebration is included in the Museum's price of general admission. For additional information, visit nhmu.utah.edu/newsdesk.

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About the Natural History Museum of Utah

The Natural History Museum of Utah is one of the leading scientific research and cultural institutions in the country. Established in 1963, the Museum's collections contain over 1.6 million objects and offers innovative exhibitions and educational programs to thousands of residents and visitors each year, including traveling and permanent exhibits, special events and other programs. With an expected attendance of 300,000 visitors a year, the Museum also offers a variety of outreach programs to communities and schools throughout Utah, reaching every school district in the state annually. The Museum has an active science program with more than 30 scientists and 10 field exhibitions each year.

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