



AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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**THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY ANNOUNCES
*WHALES: GIANTS OF THE DEEP***

EXHIBITION OPENS MARCH 23, 2013, AND REMAINS ON VIEW UNTIL JANUARY 5, 2014

The **American Museum of Natural History** announces *Whales: Giants of the Deep*, a new exhibition that transports visitors to the vibrant underwater world of the mightiest animals on Earth. *Whales* explores the latest research about these marine mammals as well as the central role they have played for thousands of years in human cultures. From the traditions of New Zealand's Maori whale riders and the Kwakwaka'wakw peoples of the Pacific Northwest to the international whaling industry and the rise of laws protecting whales from commercial hunting, the exhibition traces the close connections humans and whales have shared for centuries.

Through a variety of interactive exhibits, visitors will experience a re-created dive to the depths of the sea with a sperm whale on the hunt for a giant squid, crawl through a life-size replica of the heart of the blue whale—the largest living animal on the planet—listen to whale croons, and meet people whose lives have been inextricably linked with whales—from legendary whale riders to scientists and former whaling families.

On tour from the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, which houses one of the largest whale collections in the world, *Whales* features more than 20 skulls and skeletons from various whale species and showcases many rare specimens, including the real skeleton of a male sperm whale measuring 58 feet long (or about 18 feet longer than a school bus); life-size and scale models of whales common in the South Pacific; and ancient and contemporary objects made from whale bone and other materials such as weapons, chiefly adornments, and jewelry. The exhibition includes rarely-viewed specimens and

artifacts from the American Museum of Natural History's world-class collections, such as the massive skull of *Andrewsarchus*, a land-dwelling relative of whales, cultural objects depicting the power, majesty, and importance of whales to humans, and the log book from a whaling ship that sailed out of New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1830.

In the exhibition's Whale Lab, visitors can listen to the vocalizations of different whales and discover how they use sound to navigate, find food, and communicate; learn how scientists and amateur trackers identify individual whales on their migration through the Pacific Ocean; and explore the biology of whales, dolphins, and porpoises, including their streamlined bodies, remarkable feeding methods, and for some species, the ability to navigate or "see" with sound.

Whales also examines how humans have revered whales, hunted them, and explored their astounding adaptations to life in the sea for thousands of years. A series of videos highlights the close relationship between the people of New Zealand and whales, including the stories of three generations of whale-riding traditions, the history of the region's whaling industry, and later efforts to protect whales from commercial hunters.

Whales will open on March 23, 2013, and remain on view until January 5, 2014. The exhibition is co-curated by John Flynn, Frick Curator of Fossil Mammals and Dean of the Museum's Richard Gilder Graduate School. Flynn's research focuses on the evolution of mammals, Mesozoic vertebrates, geological dating, plate tectonics, and biogeography.

Whales is developed and presented by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. This exhibition was made possible through the support of the New Zealand Government and the Smithsonian Institution.

Generous support for Whales has been provided by the Eileen P. Bernard Exhibition Fund.

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The American Museum of Natural History, founded in 1869, is one of the world's preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. The Museum encompasses 45 permanent exhibition halls, including the Rose Center for Earth and Space and the Hayden Planetarium, as well as galleries for temporary exhibitions. It is home to the Theodore Roosevelt

Memorial, New York State's official memorial to its 33rd governor and the nation's 26th president, and a tribute to Roosevelt's enduring legacy of conservation. The Museum's five active research divisions and three cross-disciplinary centers support 200 scientists, whose work draws on a world-class permanent collection of more than 32 million specimens and artifacts, including specialized collections for frozen tissue and genomic and astrophysical data, as well as one of the largest natural history libraries in the Western Hemisphere. Through its Richard Gilder Graduate School, it is the only American museum authorized to grant the Ph.D. degree. In 2012, the Museum began offering a pilot Master of Arts in Teaching with a specialization in earth science. Approximately 5 million visitors from around the world came to the Museum last year, and its exhibitions and Space Shows can be seen in venues on five continents. The Museum's website and collection of apps for mobile devices extend its collections, exhibitions, and educational programs to millions more beyond its walls. Visit amnh.org for more information.

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