

\*\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY\*\*\*



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**CONTACTS:**

Marilyn Gillespie – 702-384-3466 or Jennifer Fox – 702-285-5486  
Las Vegas Natural History Museum

## **New Exhibit Explores Forensic Entomology at The Las Vegas Natural History Museum**

### ***CSI: Crime Scene Insects Exhibit Opens Friday***

**Crime solving insects will be spending the summer at the Las Vegas Natural History Museum as it plays host to its new exhibit, *CSI: Crime Scene Insects*.** The exhibit dives into forensic entomology, the use of insects such as flies, maggots and beetles to reveal critical details of a crime scene -- a fascinating practice that plays a vital role in solving a variety of crimes.

***CSI: Crime Scene Insects*** runs through Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 1 at the Las Vegas Natural History Museum, located at 900 N. Las Vegas Blvd., adjacent to Cashman Center in downtown Las Vegas. It is sponsored in part by Western Exterminator Company.

Inspired by the hit CSI television shows, this interactive exhibit explores criminal investigations through lively and hands-on components of forensic entomology. Visitors can observe real crime scene insects including: carrion beetles, dermestid (flesh-eating) beetles, blowflies and their maggots, and even investigate re-created crime scenes to collect evidence and solve crimes.

According to Lee Goff, an entomological consultant for the FBI and other law enforcement agencies worldwide as well as for the CSI television shows and curator of *CSI: Crime Scene Insects*, forensic entomology has been valued as an integral part of criminal scene investigation dating as far back as 13<sup>th</sup> Century China.

“Flies, beetles, wasps and other insects can provide important clues that help investigators tie suspects and victims to a crime scene, determine the timing of the crime and the role of drugs or toxins in a crime scene,” said Goff, who is also chairman of the forensic sciences program at Chaminade University of Honolulu.

In addition to getting up-close and personal with live insects, visitors can stop by the CSI Discovery Cart for live, interactive demonstrations on forensic insects, ranging from life cycles to the tools used to collect them as evidence. *CSI: Crime Scene Insects* also offers visitors the opportunity to:

- **Investigate re-created crime scenes** to collect evidence, analyze it and draw conclusions about the nature of the crimes.

(more)

- **Explore the five stages of decomposition** to learn the role insects play in the natural progression from stage to stage. Visitors can discover how important it is for forensic investigators to understand both insect lifecycles and the stages of decomposition in order to successfully use insects to help solve crimes.
- **Open morgue drawers** containing medical models of cadavers: one drawer shows the insects that reside in a decomposing body shortly after death and another drawer showing a body in a more advanced state of decomposition.

“There is a tremendous interest in crime scene investigations because of television shows and increased coverage of criminal activities and courtroom trials,” said Marilyn Gillespie, director of the Las Vegas Natural History Museum. “CSI offers our visitors, both young and old, a chance to go behind the scenes and learn how the natural behavior of insects can be used as evidence in investigations.”

*CSI: Crime Scene Insects* meets the National Science Education Standards and is acceptable for children eight years and older. *CSI: Crime Scene Insects* is a traveling exhibit developed and constructed by ExhibitQ.

Admission is \$8 for adults; \$7 for students (age 12 and over), seniors (age 55 and over) and military; \$4 for children ages 3-11. Children age 2 and under are free. The Museum is open daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and can be reached at 702-384-3466.

The Las Vegas Natural History Museum is a private, non-profit institution dedicated to educating children and families in Southern Nevada in the natural sciences – both past and present. Through interactive exhibits, educational programs and the preservation of its collections, the Museum strives to instill an understanding and appreciation of the world’s wildlife, ecosystems and cultures.

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