FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NEW FLANDRAU EXHIBIT MAGNIFIES THE “WILD WORLD OF BUGS” ON AUGUST 14

Flandrau Science Center & Planetarium’s newest exhibit reveals the diverse and intricate lives of insects through interactive displays, live inhabitants, and an engaging new show in the Eos Planetarium Theater. At 10 a.m. on Sunday, August 14, “Wild World of Bugs” will officially open, helping Tucsonans and visitors discover the huge role these tiny creatures play on a global scale. Flandrau Science Center & Planetarium is located on the University of Arizona campus at 1601 E. University Blvd. Masks are encouraged for all visitors. Wilbur the Wildcat will be making appearances through the building from 1 to 2 p.m.

Encompassing over 1,000 square feet, the exhibit features unique zones that explore insect anatomy, habitats and behavior, survival strategies, eating habits and other topics in entomology.

“We really wanted to approach this new exhibit from an immersive and thought-provoking point of view,” said Kellee Campbell, Executive Director of Flandrau Science Center & Planetarium. “This is the most significant new exhibit installed at Flandrau in quite some time, and we’re extremely excited for visitors to experience it.”

The exhibit components and scenic elements—which include a 4-foot-long model of a giant mesquite bug, a “bug bistro” and large ant fungus farm—were produced by fabrication partner Nicoma LLC, a Phoenix company.

LIVE INSECT HABITATS

As part of the installation, live creatures will be returning to Flandrau after more than eight years. Madagascar hissing cockroaches and blue death-feigning beetles will delight and fascinate visitors with their unique behaviors.

HANDS-ON AND DIGITAL ACTIVITIES

The exhibit features several fun ways to explore the world of bugs with a mixture of modern and traditional exhibits. New hands-on interactive activities include a reaction time challenge where you can measure up against flies and other quick insects, and a wind-tunnel to give bugs a test-flight. You can also get creative at a build-a-bug station or try your hand at the roly-poly skeeball game.

Play “The Curator’s Challenge” game and try to distinguish a curator’s filing system for unique insects. Insects have some of the most effective camouflage in the animal kingdom, try your skill at finding the hidden insects in our "Cryptic Critters" game. “Insect Predators” puts the
player in the role of a desert predator—like a roadrunner or grasshopper mouse—to collect as much of their preferred insect prey as possible in the time allotted.

BUG BISTRO AND BEEHIVE BOOK NOOK
The Bug Bistro illustrates the interesting ways insects get their meals through a creative take on a familiar restaurant environment. Visitors will find humorous menus and touchable displays depicting café plates filled with the culinary favorites of dung beetles, butterflies and other bugs.

The Beehive Book Nook features a macro-sized honeycomb structure that kids can relax and read a book in while learning about the important roles insects play in the health of the planet.

INSECT HOMES AND LIFESTYLES
Several displays will illustrate the fascinating world of social insects—like ants and wasps—with detailed dioramas, examples of hives and nests and interactive displays.

“The world of insects is endlessly fascinating. I hope visitors will have fun exploring what life is like for these tiny animals that play such a giant role on our planet while perhaps gaining a new appreciation for them,” said Exhibits Director Bill Plant. “We have lots of interesting stories, surprising facts and stunning imagery to share in Wild World of Bugs.”

NEW PLANETARIUM SHOW, “BUGS! A RAINFOREST ADVENTURE”
A new live-action IMAX show formatted for the Eos Planetarium Theater compliments the new exhibit. “Bugs! A Rainforest Adventure” explores the dramatic and savage lives of a praying mantis and a beautiful butterfly in the rainforests of Borneo.

ADMISSION AND TICKET DETAILS
Exhibit admission prices include access to “Wild World of Bugs” and all other science exhibits. Admission is $9 for adults, $7 for kids ages 4 to 17, and free for children 3 and under. Planetarium tickets for the new show, “Bugs! A Rainforest Adventure,” are sold separately at those same prices. Discounts are available for military, seniors, EBT card holders (under the Museums for All program) and college ID holders. In line with current state and university policies, masks are encouraged but not required. This may change as guiding policies evolve.

EXPANDED HOURS FOR FALL
Starting August 17, Flandrau Science Center & Planetarium will be open to the public Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with various planetarium shows scheduled each day. Tickets may be bought online, in advance, or purchased same-day at the front ticket counter. For more information and showtimes, visit flandrau.org.

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About Flandrau: Located at the heart of the University of Arizona campus the Flandrau Science Center & Planetarium explores our universe from earth to space and everything in-between, bringing science alive for young and life-long learners alike. Changing exhibits through the year focus on biology, energy, optics and more, weaving in ground-breaking University of Arizona research and revealing the world of science careers for budding scientists.