

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Kate Moore, Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations
(616) 929-1713; kmoore@grpm.org

**New Exhibit *Creatures of Light* Opens at the
Grand Rapids Public Museum This Weekend**

Grand Rapids, MI - The Grand Rapids Public Museum (GRPM) will open the brand new exhibit *Creatures of Light* this Saturday, March 11, giving visitors the opportunity to explore the extraordinary organisms that produce light, from the flickering fireflies found in backyards to the alien-like deep-sea fishes that illuminate the perpetually dark depths of the oceans.

In *Creatures of Light*, visitors will move through a series of luminous environments, from the familiar mushrooms on land to the extreme in the deepest parts of the ocean, to explore the diversity of organisms that glow and how they do it. Visitors will discover the ways in which light is used to attract a mate, lure unsuspecting prey, defend against a predator, and to learn how, where and why scientists study this amazing natural phenomenon.

Admission to *Creatures of Light* will be included with general admission to the Museum, and FREE to Museum members. *Creatures of Light* will be located on the Museum's second floor and run from March 11 to July 9, 2017.

Rare among organisms that live on land, the ability to glow—that is, generate light through a chemical reaction—is much more common in the ocean, where up to 90 percent of animals at depths below 2,200 feet are bioluminescent and where scientists continue to discover bizarre new bioluminescent species. Like the crystal jelly, whose glow led to a revolution in cell biology, these deep-ocean animals may hold important clues to essential questions. Scientists are in a race against time as marine habitats are increasingly threatened by pollution, overfishing, and global climate change.

Immersing within the exhibit, visitors will see and interact with bioluminescent mushrooms and flashing fireflies, see glowworms as they drop sticky threads from their bioluminescent tails to ensnare prey, learn about dinoflagellates, planktonic organisms that create a glowing halo around anything that moves through the water, and interact with the remarkable Bloody Bay Wall lit up by fluorescent corals and fishes.

Throughout the gallery, visitors can deepen their experience by interacting with iPads, which will offer engaging videos, animations, photographs and additional in-depth content about bioluminescence and related phenomena designed exclusively for this



exhibition. A symphonic soundtrack, created for *Creatures of Light* by composer Tom Phillips, evokes the magical experience of bioluminescence. As visitors move through the exhibition, the music in each section sets a distinctive mood to create a fully immersive experience.

Creatures of Light is organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York (www.amnh.org), in collaboration with the Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa, Canada, and The Field Museum, Chicago. Generous support for *Creatures of Light* has been provided by The Eileen P. Bernard Exhibition Fund.

Grand Rapids Public Museum

The Grand Rapids Public Museum is an invaluable, publicly-owned institution that is home to more than 250,000 unique artifacts that tell the history of Kent County and beyond, houses the only planetarium in the region, and is responsible for protecting the Norton Indian Mounds, a national historic landmark. The Grand Rapids Public Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, with its main location in downtown Grand Rapids, MI at 272 Pearl Street, NW. For additional information including hours of operation, admission fees and exhibit/event listings, please visit www.grpm.org.

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