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Date: May 6, 2009

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SUMMER PROGRAMS CELEBRATE GECKOS AS ART AND GECKOS AS PETS

See the exhibit Geckos—Tails to Toepads, May 30-Sept. 7

PHILADELPHIA—The Academy of Natural Sciences celebrates geckos as art, as science and as pets this summer in conjunction with the new exhibit “Geckos—Tails to Toepads.”

For those who have ever considered a gecko as a pet, the Academy offers two workshops in June and July. In late July, the Academy teams up with Nexus/Foundation for Today's Art to bring the gecko to life through contemporary artwork created specifically for this exhibit.

“Geckos—Tails to Toepads” features more than 75 live geckos and explains the science behind the little lizards. The exhibit will be on view from May 30 through Sept. 7. The following programs are **free** with museum admission unless otherwise noted.

ACADEMY MEMBERS' OPENING OF “GECKOS—TAILS TO TOEPADS” Featuring World Gecko Expert from Villanova University Friday, May 29, Opening: 5 p.m. – 9 p.m., Speaker: 6:15 pm.

Academy Members get the first look at the exhibit featuring dozens of live geckos. At 6:15 p.m. Dr. Aaron Bauer, Villanova University biology professor and world gecko expert, will give an illustrated talk on “Geckos: Biodiversity That Sticks.” Bauer, who has described more than 70 gecko species, will explain how geckos have evolved a unique visual system, complex vocalizations and climbing ability. Members also can make gecko sun-catcher crafts and learn from a teacher-naturalist all about gecko feet and adhesion.

“GECKOS—TAILS TO TOEPADS” OPENING WEEKEND Saturday and Sunday, May 30 and 31, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The public gets the first look at dozens of live geckos in this special exhibit. Hear them, see them, experience them live and up close. At 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. both days, animal keeper Zach Marchetti will present live gecko shows, including a gecko glass-climbing demonstration. Enjoy demonstrations of gecko adaptations at the Science Live Station. Make a gecko craft to take home.

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WORKSHOP: SO YOU WANT A GECKO AS A PET
Saturday, June 27, and Saturday, July 18, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Join Academy's Manager of Living Exhibits for this 3-hour, hands-on workshop to learn if a gecko is the pet for you. The first two hours of the workshop will cover the basic natural history and husbandry of selected geckos, including which geckos make the best pets for beginners. During the last hour of the workshop, keepers will discuss more advanced gecko husbandry for the more experienced gecko owner. Fee: \$25.

ART OF THE GECKO
Saturday and Sunday, July 25 and 26, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Celebrate the beauty and uniqueness of geckos as seen through the eyes of local artists. The Academy is partnering with Nexus/Foundation for Today's Art to bring the gecko to life through contemporary artwork created specifically for this exhibit by Nexus members. There also will be a separate art exhibit and sale of art created by professional and amateur artists using pre-made gecko sculptures that can be purchased in the Academy gift shop. Take a class on how to draw geckos. Learn about gecko adaptations at our Science Live Station. See a live animal demonstration and make a gecko craft to take home.

"Geckos—Tails to Toepads" was created by *Peeling Productions* at Clyde Peeling's REPTILAND of Allenwood, Pa. The exhibit is **free** with museum admission.

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The Academy is located at 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway and is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and weekends until 5 p.m. Admission is \$12 for adults, \$10 for children ages 3-12, seniors, college students and military personnel, and free for Members and children under 3. There is a \$2 fee for "Butterflies!"

Founded in 1812, The Academy of Natural Sciences is the oldest natural science research institution and museum in the Americas and is a world leader in biodiversity and environmental research. The mission of the Academy is the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences.