



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 27, 2010
Carolyn Belardo 215-299-1043, belardo@ansp.org
Press Room with images: www.ansp.org/press

BIZARRE BEASTS PAST AND PRESENT PROVES FACT IS STRANGER THAN FICTION

New exhibit opens January 2011 at the Academy of Natural Sciences

PHILADELPHIA—A new exhibit at the Academy of Natural Sciences this winter takes visitors back in time to experience some of the strangest animals that have ever lived. *Bizarre Beasts Past and Present*, on view Jan. 29–April 24, 2011, offers a hands-on experience in how prehistoric animals evolved crazy-looking features that allowed them to adapt to their unique environments.

These animals may seem unbelievable, but each one swam, crawled, flew or walked the earth. And some, like the hammer-head shark, are still around today. The realistic-looking, life-sized models of freaky fish, radical reptiles and bizarre birds—in all their gory details—are the work of Gary Staab, a world-famous illustrator and sculptor whose creations have been seen in museums, movies and on television. Staab, who lives in Missouri, worked with scientists and real fossils to create a realistic portrait of amazing creatures that lived millions of years ago.

Visitors will learn how the frightening 7-foot-tall *Dinotryma*, or “terror bird,” evolved to fit the ecological niche left by the extinction of dinosaurs. A 13-foot-long *Helicoprion* shark that lived 250 million years ago sports a row of circular teeth resembling a buzz saw. A shovel-tooth elephant that lived 7 million years ago totes a five-foot-long skull with two outsize scoop-like teeth in its lower jaw.

Touchable casts, squishy intestines to finger, interactive games, and videos help bring to life a long-ago cast of creatures that some people may be glad are no longer in existence.

Bizarre Beasts Past and Present was created by Staab Studios, Inc., and is **free** with museum admission.

###

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

HOURS: Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Saturday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. ADMISSION: \$12 adults; \$10 children 3-12, seniors, college students, military personnel; free for members and children under 3. \$2 fee for Butterflies!