***“Beverly and Jon Thompson Discovery Zone”***

**Opens July 17, 2017**

**Did You Know?**

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The *“The Beverly and Jon Thompson Discovery Zone”* is the first permanent exhibit to open at the Florida Museum of Natural History since 2004.

**Size:** 2,000-square-feet

Space within the exhibit is limited, so scheduled entry times may be necessary to optimize the visit experience.

**Target Audience:** Children ages 8 and under and their caregivers.

**Cost:** $2.3+ million

The “*Beverly and Jon Thompson Discovery Zone”* is sponsored in part by the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, Florida Division of Historical Resources, Alachua County Board of County Commissioners through the Tourist Development Tax, and generous contributions from individuals and private foundations.

**Development, Design & Construction:** The exhibition was developed by the Florida Museum with design and construction partners Lee H. Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership, The Brentwood Company, Brilliant Creative Fabrication and Walker Architects Inc.

**Exhibit Goal:** To inspire children and increase their awareness of our biological diversity and cultural heritage. Also, to engage them in developmentally-appropriate science inquiry through exploring materials, developing questions, investigating and creating new ideas about how the world works.

**Some of the Exhibit Components:**

Entry

* Beautiful displays of feathers, shells, ammonites, a coelacanth model and objects made by people, including Eskimo snow goggles and a child’s beaded vest, showcase our biological diversity and cultural heritage.

Insects & Plants

* A sculpted, larger-than-life passion flower vine features the egg, larva, pupa and adult life stages of the Zebra Longwing, Florida’s state butterfly.
* Beautiful displays illustrate insect diversity and classification.
* Discovery drawers provide opportunities to explore the world of plants, from seed dispersal to products made from plants.
* Look closely at live insects in a terrarium and an aquarium.
* The collections station includes a variety of objects to examine and sort.
* Create a masterpiece at the digital drawing station.

Exploring Past & Present

* Closely examine three enormous, touchable ammonites and a large touchable meteorite.
* Investigate past life in the fossil discovery drawers.
* Explore how different tools are made and learn how archaeologists study the past in the archaeology discovery drawers.
* Participate in an archaeological excavation at the touch table.
* Discover wildlife in your backyard from its sounds, tracks and scat.

Study Area

* Compare and contrast a vast array of skeletons, skulls, limb bones and teeth.
* Use microscopes and magnifiers to closely examine the details of insects, shells, fossils, bones and more.
* Investigate objects from nature in discovery boxes.
* Assemble replicas of ancient pottery vessels.

Pretend

* Navigate a small Cedar Key fishing boat and identify gulf species caught during a fishing activity.
* Investigate how different objects float in the wind tunnels.
* Color sea creatures and add your creation to an animated underwater scene.

Infant and Toddler Area:

* Look for the animals hidden in the tree peepholes and forest mural.
* Find baby animal photos behind doors with different latches.
* Peek through the kaleidoscope at the colors and shapes.
* Crawl through the log, hear nature sounds and discover animals.
* Turn dials to create color patterns with an Everbright.
* Explore books, puzzles and interactive toys.