

HIGH DESERT MUSEUM

W I L D L I F E *and* L I V I N G H I S T O R Y

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HIGH DESERT MUSEUM TO OPEN NEW EXHIBIT ON CREATURES THAT GLOW IN THE DARK ***Glow: Living Lights explores the fascinating world of bioluminescence***

BEND, OR—In the desert and undersea, some creatures have adapted to glow in the dark. This phenomenon, called bioluminescence, is the subject of *Glow: Living Lights*, an exhibit opening at the High Desert Museum on Saturday, June 13. The exhibit explores how and why some living organisms produce light through a chemical reaction in their bodies. “This exhibit illuminates the incredible, although little understood, story of bioluminescence in nature,” said High Desert Museum Executive Director Dana Whitelaw, Ph.D.

Visitors learn about the chemical process that produces cool light (light produced with little or no heat) and explore the world of light-producing terrestrial organisms like fireflies, glowworms and fungi. An estimated 90% of oceanic creatures produce light like the alien-looking viper fish, which dangle a light lure to attract their next meal, and cookiecutter sharks, which earned their name from the cookie-size chunks of flesh they take out of unsuspecting prey.

One of the world’s largest fungi is a type of honey mushroom that covers 3.4 square miles in the Malheur National Forest of eastern Oregon and is estimated to be over 2,400 years old. Known jokingly as the “Humongous Fungus,” in addition to its incredible size, this fungus is also bioluminescent. In contrast to animals that produce their own light, High Desert scorpions glow or fluoresce a turquoise color when exposed to ultraviolet light.

The exhibit includes demonstrations of the interesting techniques and equipment used by scientists to study bioluminescence and explore the benefits of this research. “Amazingly, bioluminescence research is leading to new ways of detecting bio-hazards including anthrax or helping speed the study of cancer-fighting drugs,” said Curator of Natural History John Goodell.

The exhibit features rare photographs and film footage of bioluminescent animals and organisms, research-related artifacts, preserved specimens and engaging hands-on activities for all ages.

The exhibit kicks off with a members only reception on Friday, June 12. For more information about the exhibit, visit www.highdesertmuseum.org

Organized and produced by Exhibit IQ, the *Glow: Living Lights* exhibit is made possible by Bend Research, Inc., Cascade Journal, GreenLoop IT Solutions and with support from James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation.

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