



MEDIA RELEASE – EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 23, 2017:

Palaeontologists converge on Peace Country for fossil search

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WEMBLEY, ALBERTA – No fewer than nine prolific palaeontologists – including Philip J. Currie – will be actively excavating in the Peace Country in search of the next prehistoric breakthrough this summer.

“This summer's fieldwork will probably be the largest palaeontological collection effort ever mounted in the Grande Prairie area,” says Corwin Sullivan, University of Alberta professor and the curator for the Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum. “It will be hard, muddy work, but by the end of the season we hope to have a substantial collection of interesting fossils and a better idea the region's immense palaeontological riches.”

The Peace region of Northwestern Alberta and Northeastern British Columbia is as fossil-rich as parts of southern Alberta, but far less-explored, creating huge potential for discovery in the region.

“I'm sure we'll come across some interesting specimens this summer, but the best ones are more than likely to be things we could never have anticipated,” says Sullivan. “Our bottom line will be to expect the unexpected.”

While the Pipestone Creek bonebed – located a short drive from the museum – is well-known for producing dinosaur bones, fossils have been found all over the Peace Country and the teams are keen to explore potential new sites.

“You never know what you will find when you do fieldwork,” says Derek Larson, the museum's assistant curator and resident palaeontologist, “but we will be collecting as many fossils as we can. Everyone is hoping to uncover the next big thing.”

Newly opened less than two years ago, the museum will begin to play an increasingly important role in local palaeontology, and this summer's fieldwork is a big step. “One of the main purposes of the museum has always been to make it as easy as possible to work on and display locally-found fossils,” explains Larson.

In addition to Sullivan, Larson, and Currie, Eva Koppelhus, Phil Bell, Nicolás Campione, Federico Fanti, Matthew Vavrek, and Xu Xing are among the palaeontologists searching the area this summer.



PHILIP J. CURRIE
DINOSAUR MUSEUM

The Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum – a 41,000 square foot world-class facility named for Canada’s preeminent palaeontologist and highlighting the rich fossil resources of Northern Alberta – opened its doors to the public on September 26, 2015 just outside of the City of Grande Prairie as Canada’s second devoted dinosaur museum.

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