



Media Release

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New exhibition reveals secret world of Spiders

Spiders, the newest exhibition at Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre, will give visitors an eight-eyed insight into the amazing world of arachnids.

Opening to the public tomorrow, *Spiders* features fascinating exhibits and interactive displays, along with 200 spider specimens including live Australian tarantulas, funnel-webs, redbacks and giant water spiders.

Questacon Director Professor Graham Durant AM said the exhibition created an immersive experience where visitors could discover the untold story of these ubiquitous creatures.

“Spiders are amongst the most successful species on Earth; outliving the dinosaurs, inhabiting every continent on Earth and even visiting Antarctica,” Professor Durant said.

“We hope that the exhibition will inspire curiosity about the natural world and a sense of wonder about the lives of spiders.

“For example, how do spiders see the world with their various configurations of multiple eyes? Do they see in colour? How does an individual spider produce and use several different types of silk? And why do peacock spiders dance?”

Visitors can explore all aspects of a spider’s life; from their unique diet, jaws and venom to their adaptation, reproduction and growth strategies in different habitats.

“Visitors can get up close to live specimens of some of Australia’s infamous spider species while learning how to identify potentially dangerous ones and how to apply first aid to a spider bite,” Professor Durant said.

Spiders was jointly developed by Questacon and the Australian Museum in Sydney, drawing on the respective strengths of each institution. The exhibition also features material developed in association with some of Australia’s other leading researchers, from universities, museums and scientists.

“The exhibition combines Questacon’s expertise in hands-on interactive exhibits with the Australian Museum’s expertise in specimen and live spider displays,” Professor Durant said.

Kim McKay AO, Executive Director and CEO of the Australian Museum (AM), said the exhibition includes some of Australia’s most significant arachnid specimens.

“We are delighted to collaborate with our colleagues at Questacon, sharing our extensive collection to help to demystify the often misunderstood spider,” Ms McKay said.

Other highlights of *Spiders* include the chance to challenge a colourful peacock spider to a dance-off or—for those that dare—the opportunity to ‘hold’ a virtual wolf spider in your hand.

Visitors can bravely step into the web of a net-casting spider to get their photo taken or peer into the insides of a spider using 3D scanning technology.

The exhibition is suitable for all ages, and entry is included with Questacon admission. *Spiders* will be on display at Questacon until October 2016 when it moves to the Australian Museum before touring to other Australian venues.

Images: High-res images of the exhibition will be available upon request after 1pm on Monday 23 November.

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