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**Discover the Biodiversity in Milwaukee's Backyard
during MPM's BioBlitz at Schlitz Audubon Nature Center**

Milwaukee—August 11, 2015—The Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM), in partnership with Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, will host its first ever BioBlitz at Schlitz Audubon on August 21 and 22. The BioBlitz is a unique opportunity for members of the community to discover the variety of life in their own backyard as well as learn how those species improve the quality of life in Milwaukee.

"We usually hear the word "biodiversity" in regard to the rainforests with their vast number of species," said Dr. Ellen Censky, Senior Vice President and Academic Dean of the Milwaukee Public Museum. "Yet the diversity of life in our own backyards is phenomenal. From our morning shower to our late night snack, we are supported by biodiversity every minute of the day."

A team of scientists, led by Dr. Censky, will survey the 185 acres of forests, wetlands, restored prairies, ravines, bluffs and shoreline that make-up Schlitz Audubon to offer a snapshot of the of the animals and plants residing in the nature center over a 24 hour-period. The BioBlitz will begin at precisely 3 pm on August 21 and end at 3 pm the following day. Unlike some other BioBlitzes where specimens are collected for 24 hours but the count and identification continue until they are done, MPM's BioBlitz will stop counting precisely 24 hours after it has begun to allow the public to be present for the final tally.

Not only is the public invited to stay and hear the final numbers, but they will have the opportunity to interact with the scientists at the base camp on August 22 from 10 am to 3 pm. They will see the specimens being identified and recorded, as well as ask questions of the experts. They can also participate in nature activities offered by the museum and Schlitz Audubon Nature Center.

"For the past 40 years, Schlitz Audubon birders have cataloged data at the Center," said Nathan Smallwood, Schlitz Audubon Executive Director. "We're very excited to see what the scientists taking part in the BioBlitz find, but also to be a part of inspiring more Milwaukeeans to take an interest in science."



Admission to the BioBlitz is free on August 22 from 10 am to 3 pm. The BioBlitz is taking place at Schlitz Audubon during the Greater Milwaukee Foundation August Gift to the Community day. In addition to BioBlitz, the Center will have a variety of activities for the public to take part in, including guided nature hikes, ponding, a raptor meet and greet, and nature play for younger children.

The Museum plans to do more BioBlitzes across Wisconsin, including in urban parks, nature preserves and even suburban developments. For more information on the BioBlitz, go to www.mpm.edu/bioblitz.

About the Milwaukee Public Museum

The Milwaukee Public Museum is a natural and human history museum located in downtown Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The museum was chartered in 1882 and opened to the public in 1884. MPM has three floors of exhibits that encompass life-size dioramas, walk-through villages, world cultures, dinosaurs, a rain forest and a live butterfly garden, as well as the Daniel M. Soref National Geographic Dome Theater & Planetarium. The museum houses more than 4.5 million objects and hosts some half a million visitors each year.

The MPM is operated by Milwaukee Public Museum, Inc., a private, non-profit company, and its facilities and collections are held in trust and supported by Milwaukee County for the benefit of the public.

About the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center

Schlitz Audubon Nature Center offers a wide range of educational programs for babies through senior citizens. Schlitz Audubon's sustainable Gold LEED certified educational center is situated on 185 acres, just 9 miles north of downtown Milwaukee. There are 6 miles of trails for hiking, snowshoeing, and skiing, and a 60-foot observation tower overlooks Lake Michigan. We are a proud partner of the National Audubon Society, working together in the areas of education and avian conservation.

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