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FISHY FOSSIL GOES ON DISPLAY AT ACADEMY

Meet Paleontologist Ted Daeschler at free presentation April 22

PHILADELPHIA—The fossil that rocked the science world for its rare, vivid evidence as a transitional species is now on permanent display for the first time in Philadelphia, one of the few places in the world to see it.

Visitors to The Academy of Natural Sciences, the oldest natural science research museum in the Americas, will see a cast—an exact replica—of the 375-million-year-old fossil containing features of both fish (scales and fins) and land-dwelling animals (flat skull, flexible neck, rudimentary limb structure) and fills in a gap in the evolutionary record. The fossil, named *Tiktaalik roseae*, was unearthed by Academy paleontologist Dr. Ted Daeschler and his colleagues in 2004 during one of a series of expeditions to Canada's Ellesmere Island, north of the Arctic Circle. The discovery was announced in an April 2006 cover story in *Nature* and has since captivated the public imagination: even schoolchildren have made drawings and recreations of it. The fossil is featured in a new brochure and book on the importance of understanding evolution produced by a committee of the National Academy of Sciences and Institute of Medicine.

The cast, plus a sculpture of what scientists believe *Tiktaalik* (tik TAH lik) looked like when alive and a video of Daeschler describing his adventures, are now on display as part of the museum's permanent "Science at the Academy" installation. The display is free with regular museum admission.

The public can meet Daeschler, the Academy's chair of vertebrate zoology, and hear about his fieldwork in the Arctic during a free presentation at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 22, called "Cold Hard Science: Paleontology Fieldwork in the High Canadian Arctic." Daeschler will show his breathtaking images of the desolate Arctic, dotted with his team's modest orange tents. He'll talk about the dangers of the trip (polar bears), the elation of finding *Tiktaalik*, and his ongoing search for more Devonian Age fossils. He'll also discuss his team's shopping list for this summer's trip. The list includes 300 energy bars, two jackhammers, 20 salamis, 20 pounds of cheese, 8 pounds of coffee, and a few pairs of socks. Reservations are recommended. Register at

http://www.ansp.org/townsquare/email_signup.php or call 215 299-1108.

For more on *Tiktaalik*, go to http://www.ansp.org/research/biodiv/vert_paleo/paleonunavut.php

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The Academy is located at 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway and is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and weekends until 5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for children ages 3–12, seniors, students with college I.D. and military personnel, and free for children under 3. There is a \$2 fee for "Butterflies!"

Founded in 1812, The Academy of Natural Sciences is the oldest natural science research museum in the Americas and is a world leader in biodiversity and environmental research. The mission of the Academy is the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences.