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***Birds of Chicago Flock to the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum
Bird Specimens On Display Starting Jan. 30***

CHICAGO (January 7, 2009) – Nearly 100 species of Illinois birds will leave their nests at the Chicago Academy of Sciences' Collections facility, which houses approximately 250,000 specimens, and flock to the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum for a new display, called *Birds of Chicago*, opening January 30.

Birds of Chicago features an array of native Illinois birds, with some specimens dating back to the early 1900s. The birds range in age, size, color and rarity, showcasing everything from the large Midwest turkey and the common blue jay to the endangered prairie chicken.

The birds on display come to life with touch screen kiosks which contain videos of the birds in their natural habitats, audio sounds of their calls, and oversized photos with additional information about their species.

Celeste Troon, manager of living vertebrates collections, said that in addition to showcasing the Academy's extensive collections of Midwest species, the new display introduces visitors to the vast number of birds native to the Chicago region.

“Over time, many aquatic, woodland and grassland birds have adapted to being in urban habitats rather than their natural habitats, which is why we have so many different types of birds in Chicago,” Troon said. “We hope that after visitors learn about these birds, they will look up at the sky from their own backyards and recognize what’s flying around.”

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The *Birds of Chicago* exhibition will be a permanent fixture within the Museum's *Wilderness Walk* exhibition, which features meticulously recreated environments of a prairie, savanna and dune, complete with true-to-life lighting, sounds and preserved animals.

Birds of Chicago, which includes nearly 100 bird specimens and interactive kiosks, will be on permanent display at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. Admission to the Museum, including special exhibitions, is \$9/adult, \$6/child 3-12, \$7/seniors and students. Thursdays are suggested donation days. Located at 2430 North Cannon Drive in Chicago's Lincoln Park, the Museum is open weekends from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, visit www.naturemuseum.org or call 773-755-5100.

About the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum

Celebrating more than 150 years of science exploration and education, the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum is the public face of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, founded in 1857 as Chicago's first museum dedicated to educating Chicagoans about nature and science through the preservation and display of native specimens, classroom activities, and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

Today the Museum continues the Academy's tradition of research, conservation and education about nature in the Midwest through participatory exhibitions and programs, educational outreach and ongoing scientific activity. Its collections, due to their age and type, are among the most important in the region. The Museum distinguishes itself through extensive involvement in schools and the opportunities it provides for visitors to experience nature up close.

As one of the city's best examples of eco-friendly building technology with its lush outdoor nature trails and habitat, green roof, solar panels, and natural light sources, the Museum engages visitors, especially urban dwellers, in new ways to connect with and preserve the natural world. Since its opening in 1999, the Museum has welcomed more than 1.5 million visitors and provides hands-on exhibitions and programs to 65,000 students annually and trains and provides resources for more than 2,000 Chicago teachers.

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