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New Royal BC Museum gallery shines a light behind-the-scenes

VICTORIA, BC – The Royal BC Museum’s world-class exhibitions and permanent galleries are well known to visitors, but some of its most important work, and people, are found behind-the-scenes, away from the public eye.

Starting today, with the new Pocket Gallery, a newly redesigned “**pocket**” in Clifford Carl Hall, visitors will have a chance to see, for free, a series of rotating exhibitions highlighting sides of the Royal BC Museum not often seen.

The first Pocket Gallery exhibition, *Finding Fishes*, features beautifully crafted replica fish and preserved fish collected from the BC coast, each **selected for its importance or uniqueness within the Royal BC Museum’s collection.**

Each fish tells a story when in the hands of Royal BC Museum’s expert scientists and researchers. Based on what it ate, how fast it grew, where it was found and other unique characteristics, specimens can speak to the health of local ecosystems, the vitality of populations and the effects of climate change.

“Our entire natural history collection is like a library with volumes of information in each specimen,” said Dr. Gavin Hanke, Royal BC Museum Curator of Vertebrate Zoology. **“The collection allows us to understand how nature has evolved and the impact of humans on British Columbia’s flora and fauna.”**

Among the specimens on display is the Bony-eared Assfish, the first of its kind found anywhere in BC. Royal BC Museum scientists caught this unique cusk-eel in 2006 during a deep-water survey in Queen Charlotte Sound, off the north end of Vancouver Island. This specimen, like many **other “firsts”, highlights the need for ongoing collecting to understand biodiversity and our connection to global ecology.**



The Pocket Gallery will feature new content every three months, continually highlighting different collections and research at the Royal BC Museum. Future exhibition themes include a look at conservation efforts to treat fire-damaged artifacts from the **U'mista Cultural Centre** in Alert Bay. **The Royal BC Museum's collections exceed seven million** objects and specimens, each contributing to the story of British Columbia's past, present and future.

"We're truly delighted at the chance to showcase the world-class collections and pioneering research of the Royal BC Museum," said Dr. Scott Cooper, Royal BC Museum Vice President, Collections, Knowledge and Engagement. "This little gallery allows us to cast a bright light on the amazing array of collections, research and conservation work that our visitors rarely get to see."

About the Royal BC Museum

The Royal BC Museum explores the province's human history and natural history, advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and history, telling the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Looking to the future, the Royal BC Museum will be a refreshed, modern museum, extending its reach far beyond Victoria as a world-class cultural venue and repository of digital treasures.

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