



Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 30, 2007

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**WHO'S AFRAID OF A BIG HAIRY SPIDER?
LET A TARANTULA TICKLE YOUR HAND AT LAKE ERIE NATURE & SCIENCE CENTER;
Check Out Stowaway Black Widow When You're Done**

Bay Village, Ohio --- We often hear the Tarantula described in terms that sound like the makings of a monster movie: big, creepy, and hairy! Lake Erie Nature & Science Center's December 15, *Meet An Animal* program will focus on the often-misunderstood Tarantula. This free, animal encounter concludes with an opportunity for you to have a live tarantula crawl across your hands. You'll also be able to get up-close and look right into this jumbo spider's eyes... all eight of them! The family-friendly *Meet An Animal* program is held on select Saturdays at 3 p.m.

While you're at the Center, check out the tarantula's new neighbor in the Invertebrates Exhibit. The headline-making, venomous black widow spider that hitched a ride on a metal spool shipment from Tennessee to Westlake is now on display at Lake Erie Nature & Science Center. The stowaway spider made a surprise arrival at a Westlake manufacturing company on November 29. Westlake's animal control officer brought it to the Center for a positive identification.

The venomous species is recognizable for its dark coloration and red hourglass marking on its abdomen. Black widows earned their name because the female occasionally eats the male after mating. They have the most potent venom of any spider in North America and a bite can be fatal (rarely) to humans. Black widows are found in Ohio, but seldom north of Columbus. By the way, this spider stays securely under glass!

Visitors can view the spider and more than 100 other live creatures that are on display at Lake Erie Nature & Science Center seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission to the Center is free. Lake Erie Nature & Science Center is located at 28728 Wolf Road in Bay Village. Call the Center for more information at (440) 871-2900 or log on to www.lensc.org.