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**ARIZONA CENTER FOR NATURE CONSERVATION/PHOENIX ZOO BRINGING  
DINOSAURS TO THE DESERT IN FALL OF 2017**

**PHOENIX (April 13)** – The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation (ACNC)/Phoenix Zoo today announced 23 prehistoric creatures will descend onto the Zoo’s Desert Lives Trail in the fall of 2017 and offer guests an unforgettable self-guided expedition into the land of the lost.

“Dinosaurs in the Desert” will open to ACNC/Phoenix Zoo members on October 3 – 5, and then the general public grand opening takes place October 6 – 8, 2017. The exhibit will be a paid experience and will take approximately 25-30 minutes to roam, or spend longer if you choose! The self-guided tour includes the animatronic dinosaur structures which move and make various sounds including the infamous roar of a tyrannosaurus rex. A fossil dig will also be found along the trail as well as a photo op with a pachyrhino.

In anticipation of this world-class exhibit coming to the Zoo, a “Design-o-Saur” coloring contest launched today in which two lucky winners will have their design painted on a mother and baby stegosaurus pair. The mother measures nearly six feet tall and seven feet long, with the baby three feet tall and three feet long. The coloring sheet and instructions can be found on the Zoo’s website (link below). To offer some inspiration to potential young artists, the Zoo received the first dinosaur of the collection which is currently on display along the Africa Trail; the citipati. This species measures nearly six feet tall and has been custom painted in the color scheme of the Chiricahua leopard frog – a true conservation success story at the Phoenix Zoo. So far, the Zoo is responsible for the release of over 23,000 leopard frogs to the wild!

As part of the exhibit, educational signage will also be found with each dinosaur, highlighting size and interesting facts known about that particular species. Interpretive guides from the ACNC/Phoenix Zoo as well as local experts will be on hand to answer guest inquiries and provide insight into the fascinating world of the prehistoric era.

The coloring contest is just the first step in a multi-faceted marketing campaign to promote this exhibit coming to the Valley. Billboards, digital ads and various marketing materials will be

launching in the coming weeks and months. The prehistoric exhibit will also be on display during the Zoo's annual holiday light show; ZooLights.

Download the stegosaurus template here: <http://phoenixzoo.org/design-o-saur/>

### **About the Arizona Center for Nature Conservation**

The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation operates the Phoenix Zoo and the South Mountain Environmental Education Center. The ACNC advances the stewardship and conservation of animals and their habitats while providing experiences that inspire people and motivate them to care for the natural world.

The Phoenix Zoo is the only zoo in the Valley accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is a non-profit zoological park, serving 1.3 million guests annually. The Zoo is home to more than 1,300 animals, many of which are endangered and threatened species. For information on upcoming events, exhibits and activities at the Phoenix Zoo, visit [phoenixzoo.org](http://phoenixzoo.org). For information about the South Mountain Environmental Education Center, visit [smeec.org](http://smeec.org).