



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Note: Photos Available

Contact: Beth Nathan
(843) 579-8660
bnathan@scaquarium.org

“CAMP CAROLINA” OPENS MARCH 15

Interactive exhibit brings the great outdoors in at the South Carolina Aquarium

Charleston, S.C. — March, 2008 — Grab the family but leave the camping gear at home to embark on this hands on interactive indoor camping journey through South Carolina — Camp Carolina housed in the Countess Alicia Spaulding Paolozzi Exhibit Gallery at the South Carolina Aquarium. The first major exhibit in over 4 years, Camp Carolina at the South Carolina Aquarium opens March 15, 2008.

Camp Carolina draws both children and adults alike into a nature based journey through the upstate region of South Carolina. Planned to turn curiosity into learning at every turn, educational components are disguised in fun filled classic and technology based interactives throughout the exhibit. Each designed for guests to walk away with an increased appreciation for wildlife and wild places and a greater understating of the importance of the leave no trace philosophy.

“Camp Carolina is just what our visitors have been asking for – a fun and interactive way for families to reconnect with wildlife and wild places,” said Kevin Mills, president and CEO. “In an age when so many children suffer from what author Richard Louv calls ‘nature-deficit disorder,’ that hands-on connection is more important than ever.”

Encompassing over 2,000 square-feet, Camp Carolina highlights both fish and mammals native to South Carolina. Feature animals include a bald eagle, a mating pair of barn owls, skunks, a hellbender and a diverse collection of aquatic species.

Sites within the exhibit include:

- **Eagle Rock**

The 250-square foot bald eagle exhibit, which draws guests as they near Camp Carolina's entrance, features a flightless bald eagle. The bald eagle is one of the great success stories of the endangered species act. Not long ago America risked losing this animal due to extinction.

- **Bowers Bait and Tackle**

After passing Eagle Rock, step up onto Bowers Bait and Tackle's 5-foot wide wraparound porch. Check out the bait of the day within the 2, 50-gallon bait buckets filled with live bait. Watch your step for a hidden pine snake under the porch's corner planks. Take a minute to sit and relax as Vern Bowers, the store owner and his friends, a fisherman, ranger and hiker share their tall-tales of past camping journeys and tips for making your journey through Camp Carolina one to remember!

- **Skunk SCENTral**

This 85 square-foot site features Magnolia and Cypress, a pair of striped skunks. Learn about these animals and why like many cute creatures they are adorable but they do not make suitable pets. Be careful, you don't want to get "skunked!"

- **Hellbender Mudslide**

Watch out, natural fear factors hide among this site's adventure, like poison ivy. Climb up next to a hellbender, the largest North American salamander, a species of special concern in South Carolina. Slide back down to continue your adventure!

- **Fallen Log**

TIMBER! Crawl through the 9-foot fallen log and peep through the openings to find the hidden skink, salamander and frogs.

- **The Camp site**

Take a break from your trek through the wilderness at this 300 square-foot interactive play area. Make yourself at home in the tent and prepare for your adventure with camping dress-up gear. Warm up by the fire, create shadow puppets or size yourself up against a life-size bear, deer, skunk and chipmunk.

- **The Stream**

Cross over the 7-foot long stream either by the swinging Rope Bridge or the grassy path. Admire various shiners and sunfish swimming below.

- **The Lake**

The 1,200 gallon lake is a fisherman's delight! Serving as the camp's dam, the lake provides a cool home for both invasive and non-invasive species. Catfish, triploid grass carp, sunfish, and largemouth bass, all are at eye level.

- **Traversing Wall**

Climb across the 30-foot long wall keeping an eye out for venomous snakes hidden in the crevasses! Hand holds allow for entertainment for both the beginner and intermediate adventurous campers.

- **The Barn**

Featuring a breeding pair of barn owls, the 26-foot long barn is designed to be reminiscent of horse stables on a farm. Give a *whoo* to these unique birds and learn about recent conservation initiatives to ensure their survival.

- **Interactive State Map**

Before you head out, step back on Bowers Bait and Tackle's front porch. Find interactive buttons which highlight outdoor points of interest on the 12x8 South Carolina State map. Light-up state wide campgrounds, parks, trails, waterfalls and the Heritage Corridor. Plan your next outdoor adventure!

All eleven interactive sites of the exhibit are designed by Aquarium staff members. Each allows for accessibility for children of all ages with low to the ground windows and traditional and non-traditional seating throughout. Built in just three months using a portion of reclaimed and sustainable materials, Camp Carolina is the result of a year of dedicated planning by both staff and Aquarium volunteers and displays a strong commitment to the Aquarium's mission of practicing and teaching conservation values.

Enjoy Camp Carolina's great outdoor experience indoors, with general admission to the Aquarium. Admission prices are: Children 1 and under (free); Youth 2-11 (\$8); Adults (\$16); Seniors 62+ (\$14). Military, senior, college and group discounts are available. For more information visit scaquarium.org/camp or call (843) 577-FISH (3474). It's s'more fun camping than you've ever had before — come join us!

Special thanks to our supporting sponsors: The Backpacker www.backpackerqualitygear.com, News Channel 2 www.wcbd.com, Papa John's Pizza www.papajohns.com and Mom's in the Know www.momsintheknow.com.

For all media inquiries, please contact Beth Nathan at (843) 579-8660 or bnathan@scaquarium.org.

About the South Carolina Aquarium:

The South Carolina Aquarium, Charleston's most visited attraction, features thousands of amazing aquatic animals from river otters and sharks to loggerhead turtles in more than 60 exhibits representing the rich biodiversity of South Carolina from the mountains to the sea. Dedicated to promoting education and conservation, the Aquarium also presents fabulous views of Charleston harbor and interactive exhibits and programs for visitors of all ages.

The South Carolina Aquarium, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, is open Monday - Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. (last ticket sold at 5 p.m.) from April 1 to August 15 and is open Monday – Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. (last ticket sold at 4 p.m.) from August 16 to March 31. The Aquarium is closed Thanksgiving Day, half day Dec. 24 (open 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and Dec. 25. Admission prices are: Children 1 and under (free); Youth 2-11 (\$8); Adults (\$16); Seniors 62+ (\$14). Military, senior, college and group discounts are available. For more information call 843.720.1990 or visit www.scaquarium.org. Memberships are available by calling 843.577.FISH.

###