

22 October 2020

## ***Sea Monsters* set to dive into Queensland Museum this Summer**

This Summer get ready to meet some of the largest and fiercest predators that ruled the depths of the oceans when *Sea Monsters: Prehistoric Ocean Predators* opens at Queensland Museum on Friday, 20 November.

Created in consultation with one of the world's leading sea monster expert, Queensland Museum palaeontologist Dr Espen Knutsen, *Sea Monsters: Prehistoric Ocean Predators* features more than 70 displays including fossils from the museum's collection.

Tickets are now on sale for the exhibition which give visitors the opportunity to come face to face with some of the world's largest reptiles to ever roam the ocean waters.

Queensland Museum Network CEO Dr Jim Thompson said the exhibition would provide an opportunity to showcase the important work of museum palaeontologists.

"Queensland Museum has one of the most significant fossil collections in the Southern Hemisphere which is overseen by a team of internationally acclaimed palaeontologists and researchers, including Dr Espen Knutsen, who helped curate *Sea Monsters: Prehistoric Ocean Predators*," Dr Thompson said.

"Queensland Museum Network is proud to have worked with Australian National Maritime Museum to bring these prehistoric marine reptiles to life as part of *Sea Monsters*."

Featuring never-before-seen real fossils from millions of years ago, gigantic life-sized casts from real specimens and immersive multimedia, *Sea Monsters* brings to life the marine predators of the past and showcases some of the predators and creatures that now rule the oceans.

Other specimens on display include a 13-metre-long Elamosaurus (a plesiosaur from North America) and 9-metre-long Prognathodon (mosasaur).

The exhibition is supported by BHP through their Project DIG partnership with Queensland Museum, to digitally unlock knowledge held in the State Collection for visitors and researchers worldwide.

*Sea Monsters* is an Australian National Maritime Museum touring exhibition, developed in partnership with Queensland Museum Network, presented in Brisbane with support from BHP as part of Project DIG.

Tickets are now on sale for the exhibition which runs from 20 November 2020 – 3 May 2021.

For more information visit [www.seamonsters.qm.qld.gov.au](http://www.seamonsters.qm.qld.gov.au)

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**Sea Monster Facts**

1. Like whales, marine reptiles originally evolved on land and then went back to the sea
2. The biggest marine reptile was the 24m *Shonisaurus*, a type of ichthyosaur
3. Australia's top plesiosaur predator, the *Kronosaurus* had a bite force of 3 tonnes – more than a saltwater crocodile.
4. The mosasaur *Prognathodon's* head was so heavy; if it had lived on land, it couldn't have lifted it.
5. We found the first sea monster fossils about 50 years before we found any dinosaurs - we've known about them for around 250 years.
6. Sea monsters ruled the oceans for over 180 million years (modern human have only been around for about 300,000 years).
7. Some ichthyosaurs could swim at speeds of 40 kilometres per hour.
8. Some Australian sea monster fossils have become stunning and valuable opals.
9. We can learn about what sea monsters ate by looking at their fossilised poo and stomach content, called coprolites and gastrolites.
10. The plesiosaur *Albertonectes* had 72 neck vertebrae – more than any other animal. We have only seven.