

Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 19, 2013

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Susan Crane (215) 247-5777 x121

Something BIG is Coming to Morris Arboretum this Spring

On April 1st, visitors to the Morris Arboretum may think nature is playing an April Fool's joke on them as Big Bugs spring to life all over the Arboretum's 92-acre garden. These amazing 'bugs' are the creation of Long Island sculptor, David Rogers and are actually immense garden sculptures made from materials like fallen hardwood trees, standing deadwood, and willow saplings. Imagine a 16-foot 1200 pound praying mantis, a parade of 25-foot long ants, a dragonfly with a wingspan of 17 feet, or a 4-foot spider spinning a 15-foot web, to name just a few of the Big Bugs. **Morris Arboretum will host 11 Big Bugs installed throughout the Arboretum's garden from April 1st through August 31st.**

Each of David Rogers' Big Bug at Morris Arboretum is a unique creation with its own whimsical character. There will be 3 Big Ants, 1 Praying Mantis, 1 Dragon Fly, 1 Damsel Fly, 1 Spider with web, 1 Assassin Bug, 1 XL Lady Bug, 1 Grasshopper, and 1 Daddy Long-Legs. Visitors will have to explore the entire Morris Arboretum garden to discover them all. The bugs are designed to awe and to educate, reminding us in a big way about the vital role that insects play in the environment, and of their diversity. "The insect world makes up a whole team of hidden gardeners," said David Rogers. "We take it for granted that they exist". With his Big Bugs displayed everywhere you look at the Morris Arboretum, the insects will be hard to ignore! But luckily, they won't be munching on the plants. Events and educational activities will accompany the exhibit. Visit www.morrisarboretum.org for updates and more details. The Big Bugs by David Rogers exhibit is made possible by the Madeleine K. Butcher Fine Arts Endowment.

A **Grand Opening** event will take place on **Saturday, April 6th, 11am-2pm**. Visitors are invited to dress as bugs for a parade around the garden. There will be bug-inspired music, a bug craft activity, and Big Bugs scavenger hunt maps. Also on site from 11am-12:30pm will be expert naturalists from The Academy of Natural Sciences with a variety of insects, some of their relatives (perhaps a tarantula or scorpion!), as well as some impressive mounted specimens.

In conjunction with the **Philadelphia Science Festival** (April 18-28), Morris Arboretum will host ***Bugs a-Brewing* at Iron Hill Brewery in Chestnut Hill on Monday April 22** from 6:30-8:00pm. Arboretum experts will discuss and field questions on topics that include insects that threaten our native tree population to bugs that 'bug' our plants to those that are beneficial and should be protected.

Big Bugs events will keep visitors entertained all summer long, from educational offerings to bug exercises to a bug tasting. Here is a sampling of events.

Insect-Inspired Art: Big Bugs Art Series (Ages 6-12) Four Sundays, April 14—May 5, 1-2:45pm. This four-week art series will take inspiration from the Dave Rogers' *Big Bugs* exhibit, drawing on location throughout the Arboretum and then returning to the classroom to paint, create metal embossing and sculptures based on what was observed in the garden. In the process, children will learn about the important role of insects in the web of life, as well the historic influence insects have had on cultures and civilizations throughout history. To register online, <https://online.morrisarboretum.org/classes> or call 215-247-5777 x125.

Or drop in to participate in the Garden Discovery Series on the first Saturday of every month from April through October from 11am to 3 pm. No reservations required; free with regular garden admission. On the first Saturday of every month visitors can experience hands-on fun at the Garden Discovery Table, located on the fabulous *Out on a Limb* canopy walk, high up in the treetops. Visitors of all ages will discover new and fascinating facts about the David Rogers' Big Bugs and their smaller counterparts crawling throughout the garden, as well as exploring other fun science topics. Creative discovery table visitors will have the chance to create a cool craft to take home. Here's what's coming: April 6 -Spiders, Bugs & Beetles; May 4 – Marvelous Metamorphosis; June 1 –Pollination Station; July 6 – Discover Fireflies; August 3 – Clever Camouflage. *Free with admission.*

Let's Move - Be a Bug is another monthly series set for the third Saturday of each month, May through August from 11am to 1pm. Giggle your way through this bug boot camp as you learn how to crawl like an ant, hop like a grasshopper, float like a dragonfly, and spin like a spider. Parents--keep up with the kids and learn these fun moves too! These events are also *free with regular garden admission* and require no reservations.

Try something completely different with the Arboretum's evening Bug Crawl – Food & Drink Pairings for the 21st Century on Wednesday, July 17. The concept of bugs as a meal is not just a novelty for the adventurous eater, but a sustainable way to feed the earth's growing population. Guests will learn about the science behind this cuisine as they sample insect edibles paired with complementary beer and wine at several Big Bug stations. *Additional fee for this event.*

This spring and summer, visitors will surely experience *BIG FUN* with *BIG BUGS* at Morris Arboretum in Chestnut Hill!

The Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania is located at 100 East Northwestern Avenue in the Chestnut Hill section of Philadelphia. The 92-acre horticulture display garden features a spectacular collection of mature trees in a beautiful and colorful landscape. The Arboretum includes numerous picturesque spots such as a formal rose garden, historic water features, a swan pond, and the only remaining freestanding fernery in North America. A new permanent nationally award winning exhibit, *Out on a Limb* – a Tree Adventure adds to Morris Arboretum's allure by transporting visitors 50 feet up into the treetops on a canopy walk that requires no climbing.

Open weekdays 10am-4pm and weekends 10am-5pm. Open late on Thursdays in June, July, and August until 8:30pm. For more information, visit www.morrisarboretum.org.