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STETSON UNIVERSITY

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Spooky Spiders and Their Kin Invade Stetson University's Gillespie Museum during Science Café

DELAND, Florida, Oct. 21, 2019 – The [Gillespie Museum](#) on [Stetson University's](#) campus is getting into the Halloween spirit during its free Science Café, featuring Florida naturalist John Serrao, who will be discussing “Our Amazing Arachnids: Florida’s Spiders and their Kin” on Wednesday, Oct. 30, 7-8:30 p.m.

“People are fascinated by spiders, scorpions and other arachnids, but not always in a positive way,” explained Serrao. “My slide program will dispel myths and misconceptions about these beneficial creatures and showcase the fabulous diversity of colors, shapes and sizes exhibited by Florida’s many species.”

Serrao’s presentation will include spiders and a slideshow, featuring more than 65 species, ranging from tiny, silvery dewdrop spiders that loiter in big orb-weavers’ webs and steal unattended prey, to gigantic fishing spiders that can overpower and eat tree frogs to all four Florida widow species.

Scorpions’ bizarre cousins, the whip scorpions, also will be shown along with daddy long legs, ticks and other spider relatives.

Serrao was a freelance naturalist in Pennsylvania before relocating to Florida, and is devoted to studying nature and interpreting it to the public. Many of his photos have been published in magazines, books and field guides.

The Gillespie Museum’s Science Cafés promotes scientific literacy by encouraging relaxed and open conversations among scientists and nonscientists of all ages.

“During the museum’s Science Cafés, we take full advantage of the warmth and charm of the Gillespie Museum, offering light refreshments, informal seating and an evening of thoughtful conversation,” said Karen Cole, PhD, director of the Gillespie Museum.

Serrao has partnered with the Gillespie Museum to publish the guide, “**75 Spiders in Central Florida**,” which will be available to purchase for \$5 and for him to sign during the Science Café.

About Stetson University

Founded in 1883, [Stetson University](#) is the oldest private university in Central Florida. Stetson focuses on intense learning experiences in a supportive community that allows students to develop their voice in a connected, inclusive environment. Stetson University ranks No. 5 on U.S. News & World Report’s 2019 list of Best Regional Universities (South), and has been recognized as one of The Princeton Review’s 385 Best Colleges, 2020 edition. [Stay connected](#) with Stetson on social media.

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