



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Monday April 14, 2014

Giant's Rib Discovery Centre acquires rare fossil for display.

The Giant's Rib Discovery Centre (GRDC) has acquired a new fossil for display at our Centre in the Dundas Valley Conservation Area. The specimen consists of the fossilized remains of a 417 million year-old Giant Sea Scorpion (*Eurypterus remipes*) originating from a section of the Bertie lime formation in New York State.

"As I understand it, the rarity of this specimen comes from the fact that these fossils are found in only two regions on the planet: Eastern Europe and in North America in the area of the Niagara Escarpment," says GRDC President Chris Hamilton. "The fossil itself does not come from the Niagara Escarpment, but from an adjacent formation formed about 3 million years later. What it represents, however, is a form of life which lived in the ancient seas while the Escarpment was forming. These creatures are thought to be one of the first to leave the oceans and move onto land and were a major predator of the time. While our specimen fits nicely in a display case, some species could grow to be two metres in length!"

"This acquisition is part of our efforts to upgrade our displays and enhance the learning experience for our visitors. You can't see one of these just anywhere," Hamilton says. "When I first started volunteering at the Centre and learned all about these creatures, I knew that if we ever had the chance, we had to try to acquire one. Thanks to a recent grant from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, we were able to make it possible."

The specimen is now on permanent display at the Discovery Centre, located in the Dundas Valley Conservation Area's Trail Centre. The GRDC is open weekends from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., offers information on the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve, a number of public education programs and free guided interpretive hikes from June through Thanksgiving.

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Canada's early settlers once called the Niagara Escarpment a "Giant's Rib." The Giant's Rib Discovery Centre is a charitable organization promoting uses of the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve that will ensure retention of its natural state for future generations. The Giant's Rib Discovery Centre (GRDC) has been recognized by the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association as a local biosphere committee for the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve.