



CONSERVE WILDLIFE
FOUNDATION OF NEW JERSEY

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Contacts:

David Wheeler, Executive Director
Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey
david.wheeler@conservewildlifenj.org
732-910-2063

James Bellis, Board President
Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum
201-213-6891

Deborah Hurley, Public Relations Consultant
201-709-4296

**Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum to host renowned wildlife artist's
endangered species exhibition**

*Free reception to feature artist James Fiorentino and Governor Thomas Kean at historic
museum in Oradell*

Oradell, NJ – Nationally recognized artist James Fiorentino is now showing his popular traveling art exhibition at Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum in Oradell, one of the nation's only wildlife art museums.

“Rare Wildlife Revealed: The James Fiorentino Traveling Art Exhibition” is making its debut at the esteemed Hiram Blauvelt Museum during the period of April 17- July 30, 2017. A free reception will be held on **Friday, May 19 from 6-8 PM at the Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum**, located at 705 Kinderkamack Road, Oradell, New Jersey 07649.

Offered by the nonprofit Conserve Wildlife Foundation, the exhibit is part of a three-year traveling exhibition around the northeastern United States that kicked off this past fall.

“We hope this exhibit will not only inspire but educate everyone who comes through our doors,” says Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum President James Bellis Jr. “You will see our very own Jersey artist pay tribute to some of New Jersey’s vulnerable wildlife species.”

The Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation established the museum in 1957 through the contribution of his private wildlife art and big game collections. The well-received three-year exhibition, launched this past fall, fittingly builds on the legacy of the late Hiram Blauvelt, philanthropist, conservationist and collector.

According to the museum's website, "Hiram hoped to educate the coming generations to the diversity and beauty of the wildlife kingdom. He especially wanted to enlighten the public to the challenges we face to preserve the marvels of wildlife and their natural environments".

Sales of the original paintings, limited edition digital prints, the exhibition book, and wildlife merchandise will benefit Conserve Wildlife Foundation.

"James Fiorentino's stunning watercolor portraits bring rare wildlife to life right on the canvas," said David Wheeler, CWF Executive Director and wildlife author. "From the bobcat and the bald eagle to the humpback whale and sea horse, these creatures great and small have managed to survive in densely populated New Jersey. But they need our help, and these gorgeous paintings illustrate what is at stake."

A member of the Society of Animal Artists, James Fiorentino has had some of his works selected to their prestigious "Art and The Animal" shows at the San Diego Natural History Museum and the Bennington Museum in Vermont. His wildlife works have been displayed and sold at galleries nationwide.

At 15, Fiorentino became the youngest artist to be featured in the National Baseball Hall of Fame with paintings of baseball legends like Reggie Jackson, Cal Ripken Jr. and Ted Williams; his sports art has since graced national magazines and landed him in interviews with *ABC World News Tonight* and countless other news studios. Now 39, Fiorentino is pursuing another lifelong passion with a three-year traveling wildlife art exhibition in New Jersey and New York.

Former New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean is expected to attend the reception. He wrote the foreword for the hardcover art book accompanying the exhibition.

"Renowned as one of the best sports artists in the country, Jim's works hang in major museums," says Governor Kean. "In recent years he has turned to wildlife. Jim has created an amazing body of work. Many of the creatures he paints are endangered, and Jim celebrates their uniqueness and beauty."

Fiorentino started painting animals when he was 10, and he later became a trustee for the Raptor Trust in Millington, N.J. "We rehabilitate 4,000 wild birds a year and release about half that number," says Fiorentino. "These wild birds have had a tremendous influence on me. I enjoy getting close to birds of prey, and it brought me back to nature art." Before going back to his studio to paint the details, Fiorentino sketches the animals up close, sometimes holding them, taking in their details.

His two young sons enjoy being in nature, the oldest son joining his father to draw wildlife, especially butterflies—proving that humans, too, benefit from having wildlife in their midst. “I am awed by what we see in our own backyard: the endangered Eastern box turtle, great horned owl, pileated woodpeckers, foxes, hawks and butterflies,” says Fiorentino. “It’s an amazing backyard ecosystem.”

The Hiram Blauvelt Art Museum is open Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 10am–4pm Saturday and Sunday 2–5pm. For more information about the museum visit: www.blauveltartmuseum.com.

Rare Wildlife Revealed: The James Fiorentino Traveling Art Exhibition is sponsored by Omni Distribution, LLC, Flying Fish Brewing Company, Merrill G. & Erita Hastings Foundation, Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery, and Somerset Patriots.

For more information on the *Rare Wildlife Revealed: The James Fiorentino Traveling Art Exhibition*, please visit www.ConserveWildlifeNJ.org/getinvolved/event/wildlifeart/. To learn more about CWF, please visit www.ConserveWildlifeNJ.org.

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Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey has worked to protect rare wildlife in New Jersey and beyond for over two decades. CWF biologists and educators utilize field science, habitat restoration, environmental education, public engagement, and volunteer stewardship to ensure our most vulnerable wildlife species can continue to call New Jersey home. Our dedicated and innovative scientists have helped many species recover and thrive again in our densely populated state.

CWF's wildlife webcams, videos, Story Maps, live webcasts, and e-books help bring wildlife directly to the screens of tens of thousands of people, while our public events and volunteer projects give people of all generations the opportunity to experience the wonders of wildlife up close. Our educators utilize art and essay contests, educational field trips, summer camps, afterschool programs, technology initiatives, classroom presentations, and wildlife-based curriculum and lesson plans that meet the latest educational standards in helping kids grow in STEAM - or Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. More information can be found at www.ConserveWildlifeNJ.org.