

Living World Lecture, February 10, 2012  
ESS 001, 7:30 P.M.

**Darwin Day at Stony Brook**

**Mark Norell**



Stony Brook University celebrates the birthday of Charles Darwin (February 12, 1809) each year with a series of events to educate us about the discovery of biological evolution and subsequent accomplishments of evolutionary biology. This year we celebrate it on Friday, February 10, and are happy to announce a special evening lecture by **Dr. Mark Norell**, a senior curator at the American Museum of Natural History and a world-renowned expert on dinosaurs. Dr. Norell will speak on

**“The Origin of Birds from Other Dinosaurs”**

**Summary:**

The evolution of many of the characteristics of birds has been a vexing problem to biologists since an evolutionary view was adopted. The origin of features like feathers, wishbones, advanced behaviors, and flight all until recently generated more speculation than empirical science. A combination of new fossil discoveries, primarily from Asia, and the use of new instruments and methodologies has changed all this. We can now dissect many of the parts of modern birds (everything

from feathers to behaviors) and understand that birds are not so special at all. Instead they are a contemporary group of living dinosaurs, whose non-avian relatives share many of their attributes.

### **Mark Norell Bio:**

Mark A. Norell received his Ph.D. in 1988 at Yale University and is now Curator and Chair of the Division of Paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. His research concerns diversity through time, and includes naming new dinosaurs, deciphering growth patterns in dinosaurs, studying the relationships of small carnivorous dinosaurs to modern birds, and attempting to develop new ways of looking at fossils using CT scans and imaging computers. He has taken part in over 50 international scientific expeditions to Patagonia, Cuba, the Chilean Andes, the Sahara, Laos, Thailand, China, West Africa and Mongolia, where his project (now in its 22nd year) has received world-wide attention. He has published over 150 scientific articles, and his work has been repeatedly listed among the top ten yearly science stories by Time magazine, Discover magazine, and Scientific American. Dr. Norell has assisted in the development of the Museum's exhibits, including "Dinosaurs: Ancient fossils, new discoveries" (Spring 2005) and "The World's Largest Dinosaurs" (Spring 2011). In 1998 he was named a New York City Leader of the Year by the New York Times.

Mark Norell has also written exciting books for young and old, including "Unearthing the Dragon" (2005, with Mick Ellison) and a remarkable series of dinosaur books for youngsters nine and older with Marco Signore and Matteo Bacchin. His work has been written up in *Discover* and *Time* magazines. He also co-organized the American Museum's major exhibit on *The Silk Road* in 2010.

Norell will stick around to talk with one and all after his lecture and we will have some of his books available for sale and signing by the author.

***Co-sponsored by the Office of the Provost, Department of Ecology and Evolution, Department of Anatomical Sciences, and the Center for Communicating Science***