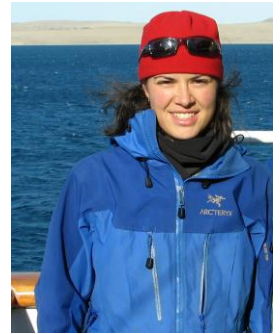


The W. Garfield Weston Foundation supports new Arctic research position at Canadian Museum of Nature

Ottawa, June 8, 2015 – The Canadian Museum of Nature has bolstered its Arctic research expertise with a \$100,000 grant from The W. Garfield Weston Foundation.

Marine biologist Dr. Virginie Roy, who completed her Ph.D in 2014 from the Université du Québec à Rimouski, is the recipient of the two-year *W. Garfield Weston Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship for Arctic Research*. Among her responsibilities, Roy will serve as scientific liaison on the museum's exhibition team that is developing a new permanent gallery on the Arctic. She will help develop the natural history themes in the gallery, which will open in 2017 for Canada's 150th anniversary, and she will facilitate access to Arctic specimens from the museum's national collection.




"This support builds on our family's commitment to advancing science in Canada's North," says Geordie Dalglish, Chair of the Northern Committee for the Foundation. "We're pleased to support Dr. Roy's work knowing that it will enable thousands of Canadians, both young and old, to better understand our changing Arctic."

Roy will also collaborate with the museum's experts to produce a comprehensive online database of marine invertebrates from the Canadian Arctic. These creatures live on or near the seafloor, an area known as the benthos, and include organisms such as worms, sea stars, and crustaceans. They are important sources of food and nutrients for organisms higher up the food chain such as fish, birds, and marine mammals. The database will incorporate the museum's extensive invertebrate collections, which include specimens collected 100 years ago during the first Canadian Arctic Expedition.

"The Canadian Museum of Nature is grateful to The W. Garfield Weston Foundation for its leadership in supporting Arctic natural history research," says Meg Beckel, museum President and CEO. "This fellowship ensures we can deepen the value of the museum's scientific and public engagement about the Arctic, and we are sure to benefit from Dr. Roy's skills, enthusiasm and dedication."

Having grown up around the lakes and forests of Quebec's Laurentian region, Roy felt a natural pull towards nature and the outdoors. After completing a biology degree at the Université de Montréal, she proceeded to a Master's program focussed on freshwater ecology and mercury contamination. Following a brief stint as a scientific advisor with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Roy enrolled in a Ph.D. program in oceanography. She pursued her growing interest in Arctic marine biology with research about environmental factors that affect the diversity and distribution of Arctic invertebrates—enabled through fieldwork, networking at conferences and visits to museum collections.



During her studies, Roy spent months aboard the Canadian research icebreaker CCGS *Amundsen* through support from the international, Canadian-led ArcticNet program, the scientific network Québec-Océan and NSERC's Canadian Healthy Oceans Network. She collected samples in the Beaufort Sea, the Canadian Archipelago, Hudson Bay and Baffin Bay. "I felt very privileged to be part of this amazing team of researchers from around the world," she explained. Roy is the recipient of numerous graduate scholarships, including support from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and *Le Fonds de recherche du Québec–Nature et technologies*.

About the W. Garfield Weston Foundation

The W. Garfield Weston Foundation is a private Canadian family foundation, established in the 1950's by Willard Garfield Weston and his wife Reta. In 1924 Garfield inherited his father's company and during his life established baking and retail businesses throughout Canada and in many parts of the world. The founders believed that as the funds are generated through the hard work and success of these Canadian companies, grants should be given in Canada for the benefit of Canadians. For three generations, The W. Garfield Weston Foundation has maintained a family tradition of supporting charitable organizations across Canada. Today the Foundation directs the majority of its funds to projects in the fields of land conservation, education, and scientific research in Canada's North. In addition, it provides funds to further Canada's research in neuroscience.

About the Canadian Museum of Nature

The Canadian Museum of Nature is Canada's national museum of natural history and natural sciences. The museum provides evidence-based insights, inspiring experiences and meaningful engagement with nature's past, present and future. It achieves this through scientific research, a 10.5 million specimen collection, education programs, signature and travelling exhibitions, and a dynamic web site, nature.ca. The museum's [Centre for Arctic Knowledge and Exploration](#) is an interdisciplinary hub dedicated to innovative research, collections care, data sharing, public programs, and training.

For more information:

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