



Media Release

# Darwin City Council

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# Charles Darwin 200 Program launch

Darwin will celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the birthday of Charles Darwin, after whom the city is named, with a number of events planned throughout 2009.

Darwin City Council in partnership with the Northern Territory Government and Charles Darwin University will launch the "Darwin 200" program of events on 22 September 2008 in Civic Park, from 10 am.

The program will be launched by the Hon. Delia Lawrie MLA, the Acting Lord Mayor Alderman Kerry Moir, and the Vice Chancellor of Charles Darwin University Professor Helen Garnett with a performance from a Darwin Symphony Orchestra harpist.

Next year marks 200 years since the birth of Charles Darwin in 1809, 170 years since the HMS Beagle sailed the Northern Territory coastline and named the port of Darwin in Charles Darwin's honour and 150 years since the first publication of the *Origin of Species* in 1859.

Just some of the events planned for "Darwin 200" include the unveiling of Council's "HMS Beagle Ship Bell Chime" artwork in Civic Park; the CDU symposium: "Charles Darwin: Shaping our Science, Society and Future"; and a Museum and Art Gallery of the NT exhibition on the evolution of the crocodile, "Supercrocodylians: Darwin's Ultimate Survival Story".

The "Charles Darwin: Shaping our Science, Society and Future" symposium will be held in September 2009 and will host a number of high profile national and international speakers. Nobel Laureate, Professor Peter Doherty, will be a keynote speaker and the event is attracting international and national interest.

In recognition of the significance of the symposium, the Society of Australian Systematic Biologists, the Australian Entomological Society and the Coral Reef Society are also holding their annual meetings in Darwin at this time. This will attract a significant number of delegates to the CDU Symposium and will be the first time the event has attracted this level of attention.

"Supercrocodylians: Darwin's Ultimate Survival Story" will be an exhibition illustrating Darwin's theories through the evolution of the crocodile. The exhibition will feature an array of crocodylian specimens from ancient fossils to modern examples including a 110 million year old massive Supercroc skull – *Sarcosuchus imperator*, the biggest crocodile known to have ever existed measuring more than 12 metres. Complimenting the exhibition will be hands-on displays with interactive elements for a younger audience. Exhibition opens 12 February 2009 and closes 29 November 2009.

Community groups are also encouraged to develop events to celebrate Darwin 200.

Further details on "Darwin 200" and the activities in 2009 can be found on [www.darwin200.org.au](http://www.darwin200.org.au). This website, hosted by Charles Darwin University, is the Asia Pacific portal for the global Darwin 200 celebrations.

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