

PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate use

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Celebrate Darwin Day with a lunchtime talk about the evolution of biodiversity

Chapel Hill – On **Friday, February 12th, at 12 pm**, the North Carolina Botanical Garden (NCBG) will celebrate the 207th birthday of Charles Darwin with a presentation by Allen Hurlbert, entitled **“The Evolution of Biodiversity: History or Science?”** The event will take place in Reeves Auditorium with free admission, open to the public.

The tropics host a stunning diversity of plants and animals relative to the temperate zone, and this fact has puzzled biologists for more than two centuries. Is this so-called “latitudinal gradient” a quirk of history, or is it based on some first order principles? The answer has implications for the consequences of global change, and for the search for life on other planets.

Hurlbert is an associate professor in the biology department at UNC-Chapel Hill. His research focuses on the structure of ecological communities, and the processes that are responsible for determining their patterns of diversity, composition, turnover and relative abundance.

This event is free, but advance registration is requested. To register, please go to http://reg.abcsignup.com/reg/event_page.aspx?ek=0005-0014-B85EDE0049B94FE5846FBDAC5ABF3677

The NCBG, part of the University of North Carolina, is a 1,000-acre assemblage of display gardens and natural areas. Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2016, the Garden is nationally known as a center for the study, display, interpretation and conservation of plants. Through its educational, recreational, therapeutic horticulture and research programs, it extends opportunities for connection with nature to people of all abilities and backgrounds. The Garden is open seven days a week and admission is free. Information at <http://ncbg.unc.edu>.

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