# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Thursday 16 September

UNDER EMBARGO 9:00AM (ACST) 16 SEPTEMBER 2021

**New citizen science project creates a buzz in regional and remote schools**

A new citizen science project, *Insect Investigators*, led by the South Australian Museum will connect school students with scientists to document their local insect biodiversity and discover insects in their area.

Launching today as part of National Biodiversity Month, *Insect Investigators* is calling for applications from regional and remote schools in South Australia, Queensland, and Western Australia.

The project requires schools to set up and run an insect trap on or near their school property in Term 1 2022. The specimens will then be studied by researchers to help build and expand on the knowledge of Australia’s insect species.

When asked about the current insect diversity in Australia Dr Erinn Fagan- Jeffries, Honorary Researcher at the South Australian Museum and project manager said,

“We have formal scientific names for only 30% of the insects in Australia. This project aims to grow this percentage by finding out what insects are inhabiting regional and remote areas.”

“*Insect Investigators* is all about connecting school students with the process of discovering and documenting their local environment and the insects that live within it,” Dr Fagan-Jeffries added.

The selected schools will receive updates about the insects they collected, resources to help teachers link the project to the curriculum, and access to online sessions with scientists.

*Insect Investigators* is looking for 50 regional and remote schools to join the project which will kick off in January next year.

“We’re encouraging as many schools as possible to fill out their application and get involved. The students will learn about the importance of biodiversity and have a lot of fun in the process,” Dr Fagan-Jeffries explained.

“We’re looking forward to see what discoveries the schools make. Who knows, we may even find a new species and if we do, we’ll work with the students to name and formally describe it.” She added.

Applications are now open to remote and regional schools in SA, QLD, and WA. To apply visit <http://insectinvestigators.com.au/apply-schools/> and submit your application by 15 October 2021.

*Insect Investigators* received grant funding from the Australian Government, led by the South Australian Museum and involves 16 partner organisations.

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**For more information or to organise an interview please contact:**

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**About the South Australian Museum**

The Museum cares for a wealth of treasures with national and international significance – it is admired for its world class collections, which have been amassed over more than 150 years and encompass everything from fossils of the first known life on Earth to pieces of Martian meteorites. The Museum’s collections are still growing and used each day in scientific and cultural research.

The Museum is one of Australia’s most successful research museums, with 151 scientific papers and presentations in 2018/2019 and is a strong partner, with strategic relationships across the resources sector as well as with state and federal governments.