



Possible inspiration for Ridley Scott's Alien, the Fangtooth



Don't be fooled by an Oleanther Hawkmoth's false eye spots



An Anglerfish has a smile that only its mother could love



Friendly welcome: A visitor gets a sneak peak at the Science Museum's latest display on aliens and the real science about their existence

It's life, Jim, and kind of like we know it

TWO OFFERS!

- Metro readers can enjoy a FREE preview of the show today, from 10am to 6pm. Just take your Metro along to the museum. Easy as that!
- Present this coupon at the museum and a child enters free for every paying adult, tomorrow and Sunday only. The Science of Aliens runs from tomorrow until February 26. Call 0870 906 3890 or visit www.science-museum.org.uk/aliens for tickets. Info is available by texting GO ALIENS to 85080.

BY SARAH HILLS

DO THEY have a speech impediment and glowing fingers, or giant ears that double as erogenous zones? Perhaps they have acid for blood. Or they burst out of the stomachs of unsuspecting astronauts.

If we are not alone in the universe, then what do our intergalactic cousins look like? The answer to that question may be closer to home than we think.

A new exhibition at the Science Museum in London opens tomorrow in the hope of demystifying the search for extraterrestrial life, not by looking

into the pages of sci-fi, but by looking at evolution here on Earth.

Senior curator Doug Millard said: 'We can speculate reasonably well about what aliens might look like. If we use the scientific principles learned through evolution on Earth, then there is no reason why we shouldn't envisage some very strange beasts indeed.'

He says clues lie in evolutionary trends that have cropped up more than once on Earth, such as flight and the

ability to see. But does the speculation matter when the chances of meeting them, if they exist, is so remote?

'The search for life is really about us,' Millard said. 'It's an ego trip. We're fascinated with the possibility that we may not be unique. It's part of our exploration of where we fit in.'

'Most life on Earth occupies extreme environments totally hostile compared to ours. Life is far more resourceful than we expected. If it can be that odd so close to home, who knows what it could be like out there.'