



San Diego Natural History Museum
2015/2016 Annual Report



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DEAR MUSEUM FRIENDS,

It is with great pleasure that I present my first letter as president and CEO, introducing the San Diego Natural History Museum's FY15/16 Annual Report. I am honored and proud to share leadership for this year with Michael "Mick" Hager, Ph.D. under whose tenure the Museum experienced such exceptional growth. Mick and the Museum's hundreds of staff, volunteers, Board, and other supporters have created a truly world-class museum. My first few months have been busy, and also an absolute pleasure. I couldn't feel more thoroughly and warmly welcomed to the Museum, Balboa Park, and San Diego, and am grateful to all who contributed to my arrival and orientation.

In my short time here, it has become clear we have amazing resources to help chart a course of growth for the Museum's next 25 years. In my 30+ years working in the museum field, I have learned the value of a strong and creative staff and healthy museum culture. TheNAT has both in abundance, and paired with unparalleled collections, scientific and educational expertise, and enthusiastic community support, we are well positioned for our next chapter.

This Annual Report highlights the Museum's most important accomplishments over the past year through its research, programs, and people, whose endeavors are outlined in detail. It also serves as an important retrospective of the community's many accolades recognizing Mick's transformational tenure here and in Balboa Park.



Recently, I had the honor of officiating the dedication of Mick's finale project, the Eleanor and Jerome Navarra Special Collections Gallery and its exceptional signature exhibition, *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science*, a project that was conceived more than seven years ago. This commitment to bringing vision to reality is another hallmark of the vibrant Museum culture that I am now privileged to join.

I look forward to leading this exceptional 142-year-old institution, and to many years of reporting on successes and sharing our accomplishments with each of you.

Sincerely,

Judy Gradwohl
President and CEO
San Diego Natural History Museum

Mick's peers awarded him the 2016 **Heart of the Park award** in honor of his tireless work on behalf of Balboa Park.



Mick receives the Heart of the Park Award from community leaders: Betty Peabody; Deborah Klochko, executive director of MOPA; Balboa Park Ranger Kim Duclo; and City Council President Todd Gloria.

A CAPSTONE YEAR

This year marked the 25th anniversary and retirement of Museum President and CEO Michael "Mick" Hager, Ph.D., our dedicated "Chief Fossil."

Mick was recruited to the Museum in 1991 following a succession of nine directors in 13 years. His colleagues warned him that taking this position would be the end of his career, and indeed it was! Even more impressive is all that he accomplished during that quarter century, which the Museum, board, staff, and members sought to celebrate over the 12 months leading to Mick's retirement.

Last year's annual report served as a retrospective of Mick's transformation of the Museum since 1991. Subsequent issues of *Field Notes* continued with this theme in our *Pages from the Past* column. This "look back" was expanded in a town-hall type presentation given by Mick at the annual meeting in October. This presentation was warmly received, and in fact, was reprised by Mick in the coming months at both the Volunteer Appreciation and the Live Oaks Society events. Twenty-five years of leadership resulted in a wealth of rich and interesting stories about how Mick and the board, staff, and membership worked together to transform the institution into a vibrant, state-of-the-art natural history facility.

At the same time, we launched a Legacy Initiative fundraising drive in honor of Mick, which exceeded

our wildest dreams, raising \$4.24 million to date. The Legacy Initiative fully funds a \$2 million endowment for the position of the Museum's president and CEO, as well as the executive search and transition, building improvements related to the library expansion, and provided a portion of the funds necessary to complete a Baja California exhibition.

On April 2, board and community leaders came together in a very public way to honor Mick at the 5th Annual Fossil Ball. It was our most successful gala to date and sold out immediately. Participation in a tribute video was so overwhelming that we had to create a "director's cut" in order to include full transcripts of the many heartfelt expressions of appreciation.

Community accolades in Mick's honor were numerous and included official proclamations from the San Diego City Council, the Office of the Mayor, and the County Board of Supervisors. Mick's peers awarded him the 2016 Heart of the Park award in honor of his tireless work on behalf of Balboa Park.

But the most meaningful recognitions came from within the Museum itself. In separate forthcoming scientific publications, Mick will be honored by having two species that are new to science named after him. Dr. Jon Rebman's publication describes a new plant species in the genus *Kallstroemia*, commonly known as Caltrop. Dr. Michael Wall's paper describes a new fig-feeding treehopper species that is only found in Peninsular California.

WELCOME, JUDY!

Judy Gradwohl's first day as the new president and CEO of the San Diego Natural History Museum was Friday, July 1, 2016. Armed with impeccable credentials which seemed made to order for the NAT, Judy brings a wealth of experience in every aspect of museum management along with a passion for natural history. Her relocation to San Diego from Washington, D.C. and the Smithsonian Institution is also a homecoming for this native Californian. Judy possesses the qualifications to guide the Museum forward with a new vision for the 21st century.

But how did we find Judy? Through the comprehensive planning and hard work of the Board of Directors and a dedicated search committee.

The most important role of a non-profit board is to hire and evaluate the president and CEO, something the San Diego Natural History Museum had not needed to do since 1991.

The Museum's board recruited a crack team to take on the challenge of replacing Mick, who had provided the vision and leadership that resulted in a complete transformation of the institution. The team was led by Virginia Crockett, past board chair and senior director of strategic university relations at Qualcomm. Accompanying Virginia on the Search Committee were Jeff Block, Austin Blue, Pam Bruder, Anita Busquets, John Downing, Allison Henderson, Steve McDonald, Jerry Navarra, and Mary Yang.

Starting more than two years in advance of Mick's scheduled retirement, the Search Committee first initiated a series of in-depth and confidential interviews with staff, donors, volunteers, and community leaders. They also spoke with other organizations that had recently completed leadership transitions to review process and timelines.

One outcome from these interviews was an initial job description based on what the Museum's constituency felt would be the critical qualities and skills a new president and CEO would need in order to build on the legacy of the past 25 years. While many of the skills and qualities Mick brought to the Museum remain relevant today, the institution Mick handed off on June 30, 2016 is completely different from the one he inherited on July 1, 1991.

With this in hand, the committee moved to the next phase of the process, securing a search firm whose values matched those of the Museum. A request for proposals was sent out in early summer 2015, and after final in-person interviews, Caldwell & Partners



Curator of Birds and Mammals Phil Unitt with Judy Gradwohl.

was hired to guide the candidate vetting, interviews, and formal recruitment.

Caldwell published the first official notice of the position opening in industry publications in November 2015 with a goal to have candidates screened and finalists set for interviews in early 2016. Some stakeholders expressed concern regarding the tight time-frame, but we were reassured by Caldwell that based on academic calendars and commitments, we were right on schedule.

Throughout the process, Virginia and the committee kept the board and Executive Committee abreast of the process with regular reports and presentations, including in-person updates from our Caldwell representative.

As planned, confidential interviews with three finalists were held in early 2016. In this age of internet and social media, a new level of discretion was required—simply checking someone's LinkedIn profile could expose an individual's candidacy and jeopardize the process. The cloak of secrecy was wrapped tightly around the process, and outside of the candidates themselves, the Search Committee, Caldwell, and the Museum's Executive Management team, no one inside or outside of the Museum knew who was under consideration. That veil was lifted in April 2016 when we had the pleasure and honor of announcing Judy Gradwohl as the Museum's incoming president and CEO.

In reviewing Judy's stellar qualifications, there is no doubt that the hard work and dedication demonstrated by the Search Committee can be characterized as an unqualified success. On behalf of all of us at the Museum and the community we serve, we would like to express our deepest appreciation to Virginia Crockett and the members of the Search Committee for a job well done.

EXHIBITS



THE MAKING OF AN EXHIBITION

Margaret Dykens carefully examines the frontispiece of a very large book. The artist has imagined a fanciful scene at the edge of a pond. A frog hangs by one foot from the stem of a rose, green as a new leaf, suspended in the moment before it pllops into the water. A lizard climbs the rose's stalk, beating out a hungry salamander to make a meal of a butterfly. Frogs cluster at the water's edge at the base of an



architectural fragment. Lush vegetation threatens to swallow the crumbling stone, but its Latin inscription is just visible: “*Admiranda tibi levium spectacula rerum*” or “The wonders of small things are worth admiring.”

The quote, from the Roman poet Virgil, is apt. There are endless details to notice in the illustration. Dykens, director of the Research Library and curator of *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science*, eagerly points them out to Museum members visiting the library during our annual Members’ Open House. The



book is *The Natural History of Frogs*, published in 1758 with illustrations by Austrian painter and naturalist August Johann Rösel von Rosenhof. They are considered perhaps the most beautiful and scientifically accurate depictions of frogs ever painted. Dykens has pulled the book from the library’s shelves along with several other rare books to show members a side of the NAT’s collections that few people ever get to see. She has done this for the Members’ Open House every year for 19 years. And like every year, at the end of the night, she carefully closes *The Natural History of Frogs* and puts it back in its place in the rare book room.

Her days of sequestering the book from public view ended on August 20 when the Eleanor and Jerome Navarra Special Collections Gallery opened its doors. The two-level, 3,000-square-foot space gives visitors a look at the resources from the Research Library and rare book room. All Museum visitors can now appreciate some of the rare books, archival materials, photographs, and works of art from our library in this new exhibition.

The main floor of the Special Collections Gallery is home to its core exhibition, *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science*. Von Rosenhof, the artist responsible for the gloriously rendered frogs, was not a trained biologist. He was a painter whose fascination with nature drove him to study the minutiae of a frog’s behaviors and life cycle as no scientist had yet done. The exhibition celebrates these “citizen scientists” from history—passionate and talented artists, photographers, and collectors with little or no formal scientific training who have contributed to our understanding of the natural world. Visitors encounter people like John James Audubon, a dry-goods merchant who abandoned his business to paint North America’s birds, and San Diego’s own Laurence Klauber, an executive at San Diego Gas and Electric who became the world’s self-taught authority on rattlesnakes. *Extraordinary Ideas* also invites visitors to see themselves as citizen scientists, connecting them with participatory projects such as the Audubon Society’s Great Backyard Bird Count and the NAT’s own Amphibian and Reptile Atlas of Peninsular California.

Opposite page: Curator Margi Dykens admires the newly installed mural of the frontispiece from the 1758 book *The Natural History of Frogs*. The actual book is open to the same page and is on display next to the mural (top).

This page from top: Kim Blackford fabricates cabinets to display the priceless objects; a frog is fabricated for display inside the exhibition; Bradley Tsalyuk tests an interactive before it is installed.



Samantha Moreno constructs one of the oversized books for the Book Nook on the upper mezzanine of the gallery; Brian Gibson and Jim Melli craft sculpting foam into what will become the griffin pediment above the entrance.

With oversight from Beth Redmond-Jones, senior director of public programs, the Exhibits team worked for 18 months on *Extraordinary Ideas* while the existing library reading room was transformed into an exhibition gallery. Dykens worked with Exhibit Developer Erica Kelly to select works to display and stories to tell. Exhibit Designer Michael Field and Graphic Designer Lydia D'Moch envisioned a jewel-toned space richly accented with imagery from the books' pages. Artists Brian Gibson, Jim Melli, and Samantha Moreno constructed the whimsically oversized natural history books and dramatic pediment that flank the gallery entrance, while Melli sculpted animals and plants that seem sprung from natural history illustrations to pop up throughout the space on tabletops and inside cases. Carpenters

Kim Blackford and Jenny Armer painstakingly crafted exhibit furniture by hand. Renato Rodriguez and Bradley Tsalyuk supported the team with image licensing and project management, while Digital Content Developer Robert Rutherford and media production firm Angle Park, Inc. created digital media that allow visitors a deeper dive into the pages of the books and the stories behind them.

The entire project was supported by a strong team of Museum staff from building operations, marketing, development, AV/IT, administration, visitor services, public programs and BRCC. One key component that required months of coordination was the oversight of the construction project led by CFO and COO Susan Loveall, Executive Assistant Chena Popper, and Senior Director of Operations Josh Culver. In addition, our store partner Event Network developed a special line of products inspired by the exhibition.

The team found a steady source of inspiration in Margaret Dykens' infectious passion for the library's collection and the stories behind it. Her most beloved works no longer have to go back on a shelf—they have a permanent place out in the open, where visitors can get to know a previously hidden side of theNAT.

CITIZEN SCIENCE: IT'S WHAT WE DO

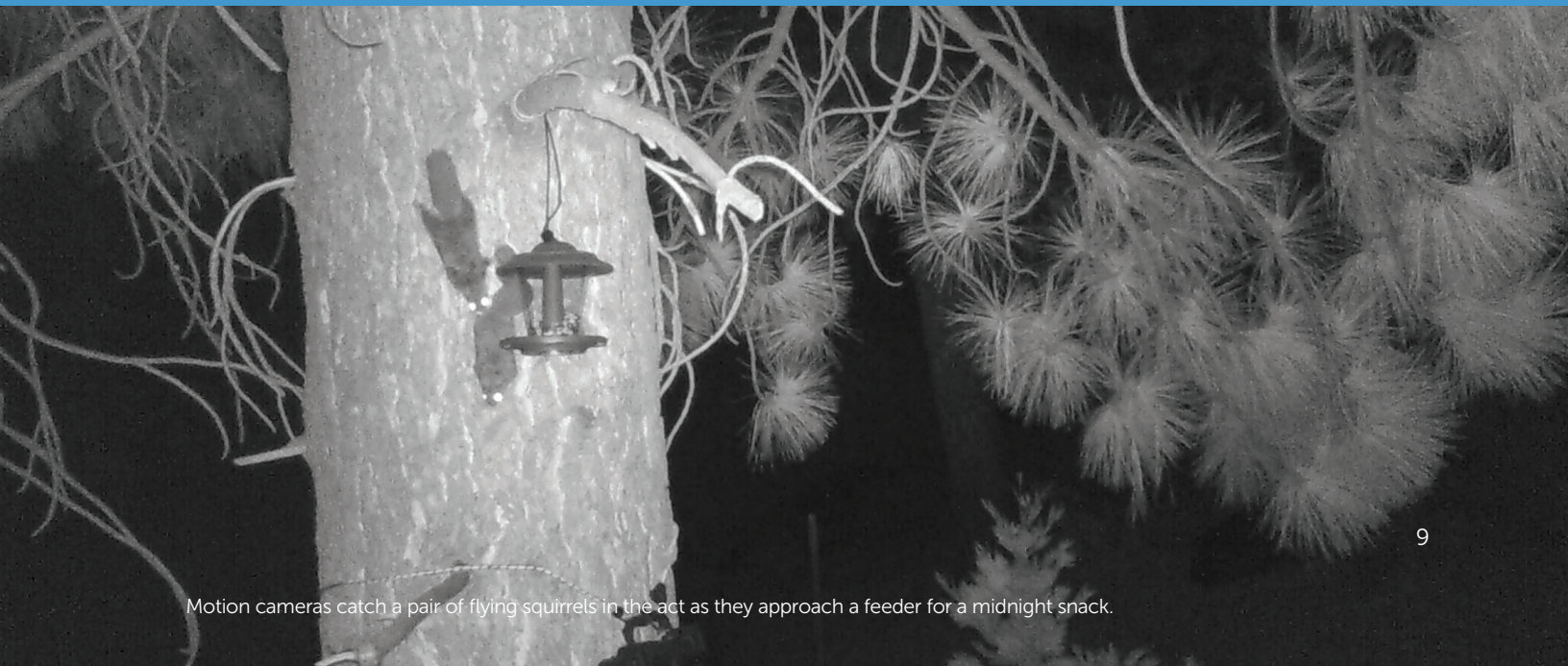
Citizen science has always been part of the DNA of the San Diego Natural History Museum, and in the last year our scientists launched us into the digital era with two projects. The Amphibian and Reptile Atlas of Peninsular California has led the way nationally by combining historic Museum collections with contemporary observations made by citizen scientists using the popular *iNaturalist* mobile app. Using similar technology, scientists in the Birds and Mammals Department have collaborated with the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and citizen scientists to try to determine the distribution and habitat use of the elusive San Bernardino flying squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus californicus*). True to the idiom, "many hands make light work," the scientific advances of these two projects would not have been possible without the help of citizen scientists from throughout our region.

Launched in 2014, the Amphibian and Reptile Atlas of Peninsular California (sdnat.org/herpatlas) has helped Museum scientists better understand patterns

that would have been difficult to discern without the observations of its more than 1,500 users. Most notable is that the Atlas is illuminating the distribution of our region's non-native snakes, lizards, and amphibians. To date, citizen scientists have submitted over 843 observations of non-native species.

One notable contribution of Atlas users is six additional records of the rarely seen non-native Brahminy blind snake (*Ramphotyphlops braminus*). The second pattern being illuminated by Atlas users is a better understanding of which species can best cohabitate with humans, the urban adapters. "In hindsight, it makes sense that we are learning these things because most of our users live in urban areas. So we are seeing the species they most often encounter in their neighborhoods. Those include both native and non-native species that are tolerant to human disturbance," said Dr. Bradford Hollingsworth, curator of herpetology and the creator of the Atlas.

Although it was originally designed to help scientists better understand diversity and distribution patterns,



Motion cameras catch a pair of flying squirrels in the act as they approach a feeder for a midnight snack.

Hollingsworth has been surprised by the interesting ecological interactions that are captured in user-submitted photographs. “We have had great photos submitted that capture mating behavior, show the relationships of predators and their prey, and document habitat use that I have never seen myself in the wild,” Hollingsworth remarked.



Like the Amphibian and Reptile Atlas of Peninsular California, the Flying Squirrels of Southern California project combines the Museum’s research expertise with the eyes and ears of the general public to better understand our region’s biodiversity. The Birds and Mammals Department had hoped

to document the San Bernardino flying squirrel while working on a survey of the San Jacinto Mountains from 2008 to 2014. “From historical records, we knew it was found here 100 years ago. So when we didn’t find it, we got worried about how it was doing in other parts of its range,” said Mammalogist Scott Tremor. Thus began a project using motion-activated cameras set up in the backyards of more than 30 homes scattered throughout the San Bernardino Mountains. “We have been pleasantly surprised to see how many flying squirrels are using residential areas in the mountains,” remarked Kevin Clark, director of Bioservices. “We still have more work to do, but the observations of the families and school groups helping us out will be critical to developing management plans to help conserve these secretive little squirrels.”

Since being established in 1874 by a group of amateur naturalists, the San Diego Natural History Museum has always been a place where people from all backgrounds can become involved in natural science. “We were doing citizen science before people called it citizen science,” says Dr. Michael Wall, vice president of research and public programs and curator of entomology, “This is just what we do.”



“We have been pleasantly surprised to see how many **flying squirrels** are using residential areas in the mountains.”

Left: staff from the Museum and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service install equipment in the backyard of a residence for the flying squirrel study. Right: a young citizen scientist with a Desert Iguana posted to iNaturalist.

VOLUNTEERS



Bob Gordon, a Canyoneer and falconer, introduces visitors to Skylar the red-tailed hawk.

Krisztina Rakosi, high school intern, sorts insects for Entomology.



FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY: TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS

How do you take an ordinary citizen with an interest in nature and turn them into an extraordinary naturalist? At theNAT, that's easy. Every volunteer has access to training that is not found elsewhere in San Diego County. Imagine hearing lectures from Museum scientists, local experts, and sometimes seasoned volunteers who have become experts in their own right. Or better yet, imagine working side-by-side with Museum curators. This past year, current volunteers and 293 new ones had access to these exceptional opportunities.

Canyonereers who lead public hikes throughout San Diego County receive rigorous training on the flora and fauna, the geology, and human history of the county's natural landscapes. When you take a hike with the Canyonereers you will receive scientific information distilled in a way that is accessible to anyone. Longtime Canyoneer Pauline Jimenez says the training "offers fascinating ways to discover 'trail secrets' in your own back yard and a camaraderie with fellow 'citizen scientists' who will become newfound friends."

The Museum Whaler program trains naturalists who provide information on marine life off the coast of San Diego. Whalers hear lectures by scientists from NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) who present findings not yet shared with the public along with talks by other experts and seasoned volunteers. Sheri Knox, Whaler for 11 years, describes

the training as, "thorough, well thought out, tested and revised year-to-year as needed."

The Docents, who do outreach to the schools and interpret the exhibitions for visitors, receive a 6-month course in natural history. Museum curators and outside experts cover a variety of topics on the flora, fauna, and geology of the region in addition to exhibition content and effective engagement techniques. Docents take that knowledge and share it with thousands of people, young and old alike. Longtime Docent Teresa Norris characterized the training as a "free mini college course in natural history."

Volunteers who work in the science departments gain hands-on training with the invaluable scientific collections working side-by-side with Museum curators. Even the camp aides receive opportunities to learn more about science with behind-the-scene tours. Covey members, the oldest volunteer group started in 1967, hear lectures by the Museum curators that keep them up-to-date on the latest research. Traveling exhibition volunteers learn about the exhibition content and receive tips on how to engage the visitors.

Becoming a volunteer with theNAT means not only contributing but also learning about nature so that that knowledge can be spread far and wide. The volunteers are citizen scientists carrying forward a long tradition.

SPECIAL PROJECTS CAMPAIGN: PROJECT COMPLETION

The Board of Directors of the San Diego Natural History Museum approved the \$14.9 million Special Projects Campaign in December 2012, launched by a \$7 million grant from California State Parks in support of the core exhibition, *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*. While *Coast to Cactus* was a \$9 million project, the campaign included bridge funding to support operations during the campaign, and also development of an additional permanent exhibition, *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science*. Installing this exhibition in a renovated and expanded library and new Special Collections Gallery would allow the Museum to dissolve the walls between our research and the public for the first time in our history.

By December 2013, with the original goal within striking distance, the board approved an increased goal of \$16 million. This gave room for the full Museum membership to participate in the campaign while also increasing the amount of bridge funding and covering projected increased library construction costs as plans were formalized.

Throughout 2014, the Dennis and Carol Wilson Hall of Biodiversity, which would be the future home of *Coast to Cactus*, underwent renovations and culminated in a “wall signing” topping off ceremony on March 23, 2014. Shortly after, the installation of exhibit components began in earnest, with final touches being made up until the dedication and ribbon cutting on January 14, 2015. It was at that event that the over-the-top pledge was received, with the campaign reaching its \$16 million goal, though ultimately a thrilling \$16.7 million was raised!



Margi Dykens celebrates the completion of the Special Projects Campaign with Dennis and Carol Wilson.



Eleanor and Jerome Navarra with Curator Margi Dykens.

Over the 18 months since its dedication, *Coast to Cactus* has received numerous prestigious awards, including four from the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). One of these was Overall Excellence for an Exhibition, which is the highest honor an exhibition can achieve. This is the museum industry’s equivalent of winning an Oscar.

Next the Museum’s talented exhibit development and design team shifted their attention to the second exhibition funded through the Special Projects Campaign: *Extraordinary Ideas*. While exhibition concepts and components were developed and tested, the construction team tackled the extremely challenging job of renovating, expanding, and upgrading our 1933 library and adjacent research areas. In order to create the free-floating mezzanines above the main library floor, an ingeniously engineered system of welded branches was designed to solve the problem. The climate controls were updated in order to meet museum conservation standards for archival materials, and was expanded to the full library, including the 56,000 volume “stacks.”

Once again, we celebrated the end of construction with a “wall signing” in the newly completed Eleanor and Jerome Navarra Special Collections Gallery on February 23, 2016. And once again, the exhibits team began the process of installation. Over several months, the ideas first tested in 1-inch scale were realized in the new gallery, culminating with a week of dedication events beginning on August 16. As the finale project of recently retired President and CEO Mick Hager, the Eleanor and Jerome Navarra Special Collections Gallery and its signature exhibition *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science* serve as a beautiful bookend to a rich and productive career.

BY THE NUMBERS

Volunteers

741 total volunteers
 58,143 total volunteer hours
 \$1,604,165 dollar value of volunteer hours (per Bureau of Labor Statistics)
 Canyoneers led 70 hikes for 2,081 people, including 15 hikes for 254 students and chaperones.
 Docents reached 5,361 students and chaperones with 154 programs.
 Whalers reached 27,037 passengers on 296 cruises through Hornblower Cruises and Events.
 56 high school students volunteered for spring, winter and summer camps.
 8 high school students worked in the departments of herpetology, botany, paleontology, and entomology.

Social Media

Facebook: 31,572 likes
 Twitter: 7,784 followers
 Instagram: 1,249 followers
 YouTube: 142 subscribers

Public Programs

San Diego Programs
 Nature to You Loan Library: 733 loans reaching 111,422 people
 School Programs: 740 programs reaching 36,445 students
 Family and Public Programs: 185 programs serving 20,290 participants
 Museum Access Funds: 9,106 students from Title 1 schools served

Baja California Programs: Smart Schools, Green Practices
 Workshops facilitated: 11
 Teachers trained: 128
 Students trained: 293
 Students impacted: 17,401
 Individuals benefited from program: 29,091

Visitation

380,160 people visited the Museum
 593,647 website visits (50% from mobile devices)



BRCC Collections

Total Number of Specimens: ~ 8 million

Birds

New specimens collected: 182
 Total specimens: 49,621

Mammals

New specimens collected: 88
 Total specimens: 24,247

Herpetology

New specimens collected: 214
 Total specimens: 77,176

Entomology

New specimens collected: ~214,442
 Total specimens: ~874,442

Paleontology

New specimens collected: 18,766
 Total specimens: 1,374,726

Botany

New specimens collected: 7,949
 Total specimens: 252,473

Research Library

56,000 volumes

Marine Invertebrates

5 million specimens

Mineralogy

15,000 specimens



A YEAR OF AWARD-WINNING PROGRAMS

Coast to Cactus in Southern California opened to rave reviews in January 2015, but just because the exhibition is open, it doesn't mean that our work is done. Our Exhibits team continues to make improvements to the exhibition including new labels, changing out live animals, and changing the beautiful A.R. Valentien paintings in the Torrey Pines section of the exhibition, in addition to daily maintenance to keep the exhibition in tip-top shape.

The “overall excellence” is the **top honor** a museum can receive. . .it keeps us motivated to continue creating exceptional visitor experiences.

All the work our Public Programs team puts in does not go unnoticed. In May 2016, theNAT received national honors for *Coast to Cactus in Southern California* from the American Alliance of Museums.

The Overall Excellence is the top honor a museum can receive for an exhibition. It gives us peer recognition for doing outstanding work. It gives our Museum national exposure within the industry. And it’s gratifying and rewarding for our team...it keeps us motivated to continue creating exceptional visitor experiences. In fact, theNAT was very fortunate this year to win four awards—check them out below.

Since the opening, the team has also been very busy developing other elements to support the exhibition. A microsite, generously funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), called Explore the Region from *Coast to Cactus* (sdnat.org/explore) allows website users to explore the unique habitats of southern California as well as the animal, plants, people, and places that can be found here. The site also encourages users to contribute content to the *Coast to Cactus* Digital Scrapbook and participate in science projects such as the Amphibian and Reptile Atlas of Peninsular California, the Flying Squirrel Study, and iNaturalist.

This microsite was developed by the Museum’s exhibits, education, and digital teams in collaboration with the Balboa Park Online Collaborative. As with the exhibition, launching the website was only our first step in the process. Our team hired the market research firm Designing Insights at two different points in the process to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the website. The results of these evaluations identified recommendations for improvement, which have been implemented. In addition, we continue to add more content to the site on a regular basis. Explore the Region from *Coast to Cactus* allows users to dig into some content from the comfort of their own home or supplement their visit while in the exhibition.

Another addition that has been created specifically for educators in our region is the *Coast to Cactus* curriculum for grades K-8. These new curricula align with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and provide lesson plans for the classroom that support what kids will see and experience in the exhibition itself. These curricula are available in both English and Spanish and can be downloaded from our website.

The final addition that been created is a brand-new hiking guide titled *Coast to Cactus: The Canyoneer Trail Guide to San Diego Outdoors*, which hit shelves in September. The book was written and edited by the Museum’s Canyoneers, trained naturalists who have been leading nature hikes throughout San Diego County for over 40 years. Much more than a typical hiking guide, this guidebook details more than 250 hiking options in the San Diego region and provides an unprecedented level of information on the flora, fauna, and habitats encountered on the various hikes. It encourages hikers to stop, look, listen, touch, smell, and examine to understand that everything is linked together, comparable to a Canyoneer-led nature walk experience.

AWARDS FOR THE NAT’S PROGRAMS

American Alliance of Museums 28th Annual Excellence in Exhibition Competition

Overall Excellence for an Exhibition for *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*

2016 AAM Media & Technology MUSE Award

Honorable Mention for Video, Film and Computer Animation for the *Punk Skunk* video series

2016 Sustainability Excellence Award

This was awarded to theNAT for *Coast to Cactus in Southern California* as a model of Sustainable Exhibitions—Large Museum.

2016 CurCom Excellence in Exhibition Label Writing Competition

TheNAT won for the Wildfire in the Chaparral (Chapter 3) exhibit in *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*.

FINANCIALS

The Museum finished its fiscal year continuing to build on its financial condition and its investment in our exhibitions and educational programs, which highlight this biologically significant region in which we live. Our net assets grew by more than \$1.2 million, largely due to an increase of over \$2.6 million in our permanent endowment. During this year, we also completed *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science*, which showcases the role of citizen scientists.

While our total income decreased, we continued to operate at a surplus. Contract income, which is derived from the scientific consulting done by our talented researchers, increased and continues to contribute over 16 percent to the Museum's revenue. This valuable revenue source provides support for the Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias and the care of the Museum's collections.

The overall income decrease is due to two primary factors. While our traveling exhibitions this year were compelling and met with rave reviews, they did not draw the attendance the tremendously successful *The Discovery of King Tut* did the previous year. Likewise, our Legacy campaign which marked the retirement of Dr. Mick Hager and welcomed Judy Gradwohl,

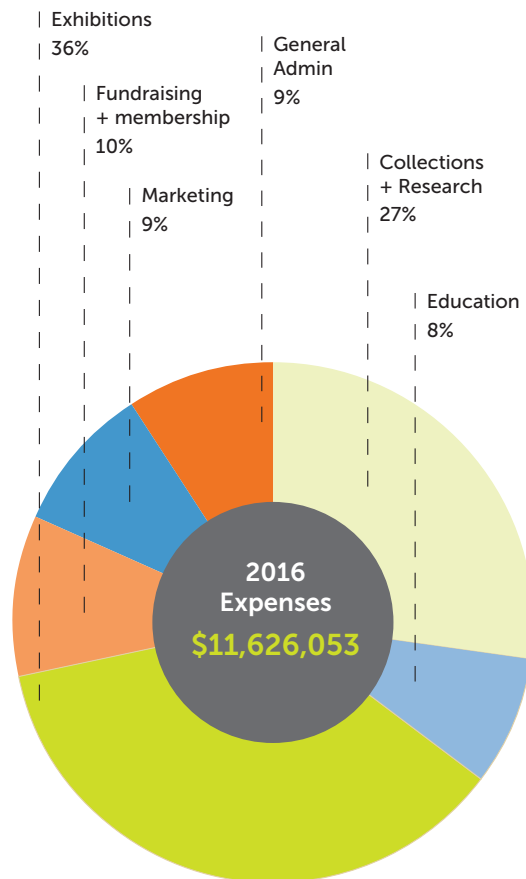
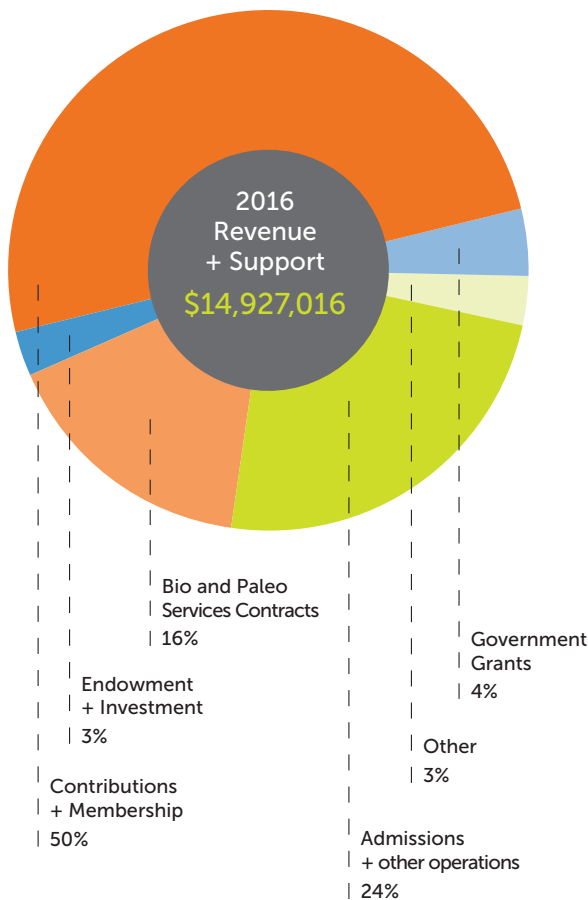
brought in more than \$4 million (exceeding the goal) but was smaller by comparison to the Special Projects Campaign, which was completed the previous year.

The Museum's exhibit-related expenses also decreased, compared to the prior year when we hosted 10 months of traveling exhibitions and completed *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*. All other costs stayed relatively consistent from the previous year.

The Museum's financial condition is reflected in the Statement of Financial Position at right. Additional detail can be found in our audited financials which are posted on our website. The Museum's focus on operating sustainably, combined with generous gifts and strong admissions, has resulted in a strong financial condition that allows us to invest in our mission of providing educational programs, exhibitions, and scientific research to our community.



Susan Loveall
Vice President, CFO and COO



July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016

Operating Revenue and Expenses

	Fiscal Year 2016		Fiscal Year 2015	
Revenue and Support				
Admissions and other operating income	\$3,593,518	24%	\$5,326,573	21%
Bio and Paleo Services contracts	\$2,364,382	16%	\$2,105,259	8%
Endowment/investment income	\$492,339	3%	\$430,033	2%
Contributions & Membership	\$7,393,568	50%	\$14,197,288	57%
Government Grants (inc. Prop 84 exhibition grant)	\$639,038	4%	\$2,380,674	10%
Other support	\$444,171	3%	\$382,744	2%
Total Revenue and Support	\$14,927,016	100%	\$24,822,571	100%
Expenses				
Collections and research	\$3,172,331	27%	\$3,356,566	22%
Education	\$984,336	8%	\$995,400	6%
Exhibitions	\$4,186,197	36%	\$7,382,279	48%
Fundraising/membership	\$1,157,873	10%	\$1,266,843	8%
Communications/marketing	\$1,024,019	9%	\$1,438,238	9%
General administrative	\$1,101,297	9%	\$1,058,575	7%
Total Expenses	\$11,626,053	100%	\$15,497,901	100%
Excess of Operating Revenue & Support Over Expenses	\$3,300,963		\$9,324,670	

Financial Position

	2016	2015
Assets		
Cash	\$2,855,487	\$2,885,568
Investments and perpetual trusts	\$22,840,881	\$21,086,986
Receivables and prepaid expenses	\$2,321,625	\$4,519,589
Property, equipment (less accumulated depreciation)	\$22,155,841	\$20,658,580
Total Assets	\$50,173,834	\$49,150,723
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$1,291,512	\$1,766,377
Other short-term liabilities	\$113,951	\$352,898
Notes payable	\$525,000	\$-
Total Liabilities	\$1,930,463	\$2,119,275
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	\$22,536,860	\$20,629,508
Temporarily restricted	\$8,393,574	\$11,776,759
Permanently restricted	\$17,312,937	\$14,625,182
Total Net Assets	\$48,243,371	\$47,031,449
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$50,173,834	\$49,150,724

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Saturday, April 2, 2016
 Celebrating the 25th anniversary and
 retirement of Mick Hager, Ph.D., our
 "Chief Fossil"

Fossil Ball Event Co-Chairs

Anne Bullard
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Chief Fossil Table

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Flamingo image from Audubon's *Birds of America*.

Inside front cover image

A collection of bird eggs donated by a local citizen scientist.

Inside back cover image

Botany volunteer preparing herbarium specimens.



Our Mission

To interpret the natural world through research, education and exhibits; to promote understanding of the evolution and diversity of southern California and the peninsula of Baja California; and to inspire in all a respect for nature and the environment.

