

# Field Notes

ISSUE 1 VOLUME 3 FEBRUARY 2012



SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

## Pages from the Past

The San Diego Natural History Museum has a long history of participation in conservation efforts in our area. In this photo from the 1920s, Museum members are seen erecting a sign along San Diego Bay prohibiting the shooting of shorebirds. According to Museum records, on Christmas morning in 1922, a Museum member spotted three men in a boat, shooting birds on the Bay. He notified police and the offenders were arrested and jailed. Police reportedly also confiscated a quantity of bootleg liquor during the arrest.



### Correction:

In the May 2011 issue of *Field Notes*, the caption below the photo on page 5 should have read: *Opposite: California Sea Otter calcanei and humerus (proximal end unfused)*  
*Above: Short-tailed Albatross tibiotarsus and Red-throated Loon coracoid.*

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Contributors  
Abe Ordovery, Gabrielle Fox

Cover image: Fossil Ball, Celebrating Michael W. Hager, Ph.D., for his 20 years of leadership, dedication, and passion for our region. Illustration by William Stout.

The Membership Department can be reached Monday–Friday, 9 AM–5 PM for assistance with change of address, replacement cards, renewing or upgrading your membership, and any other questions. Contact 619.255.0275 or [membership@sdnhm.org](mailto:membership@sdnhm.org).

San Diego Natural History Museum 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.*

San Diego Natural History Museum  
1788 El Prado, Balboa Park  
San Diego, CA 92101  
Phone: 619.232.3821 [www.sdnhm.org](http://www.sdnhm.org)

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## Botany

The Giant Chain Fern (*Woodwardia fimbriata*) Blechnaceae and the Western Spleenwort (*Asplenium vespertinum*) Aspleniaceae are two of approximately 50 different ferns and lycophytes that occur naturally

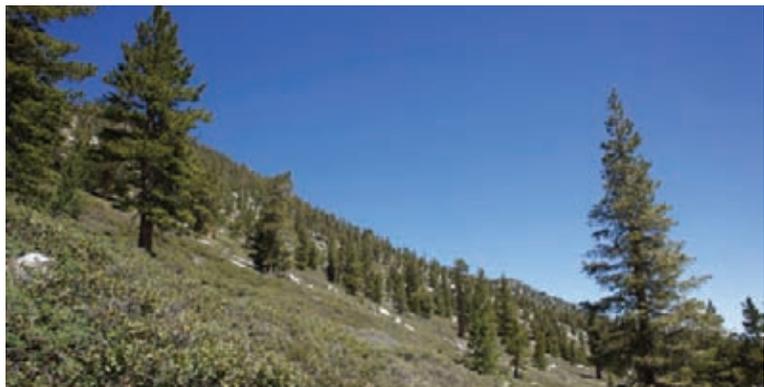


in San Diego County. A new book entitled *Ferns and Lycophytes of San Diego County, California* written by SDNHM Botany Department volunteer, Annette Winner, and the SDNHM Curator of Botany, Dr. Jon Rebman, is completed and is currently in the scientific-review process. This new publication is expected to be printed in mid-2012 and will contain detailed information on these ancient and diverse plant groups in our region.



## Entomology

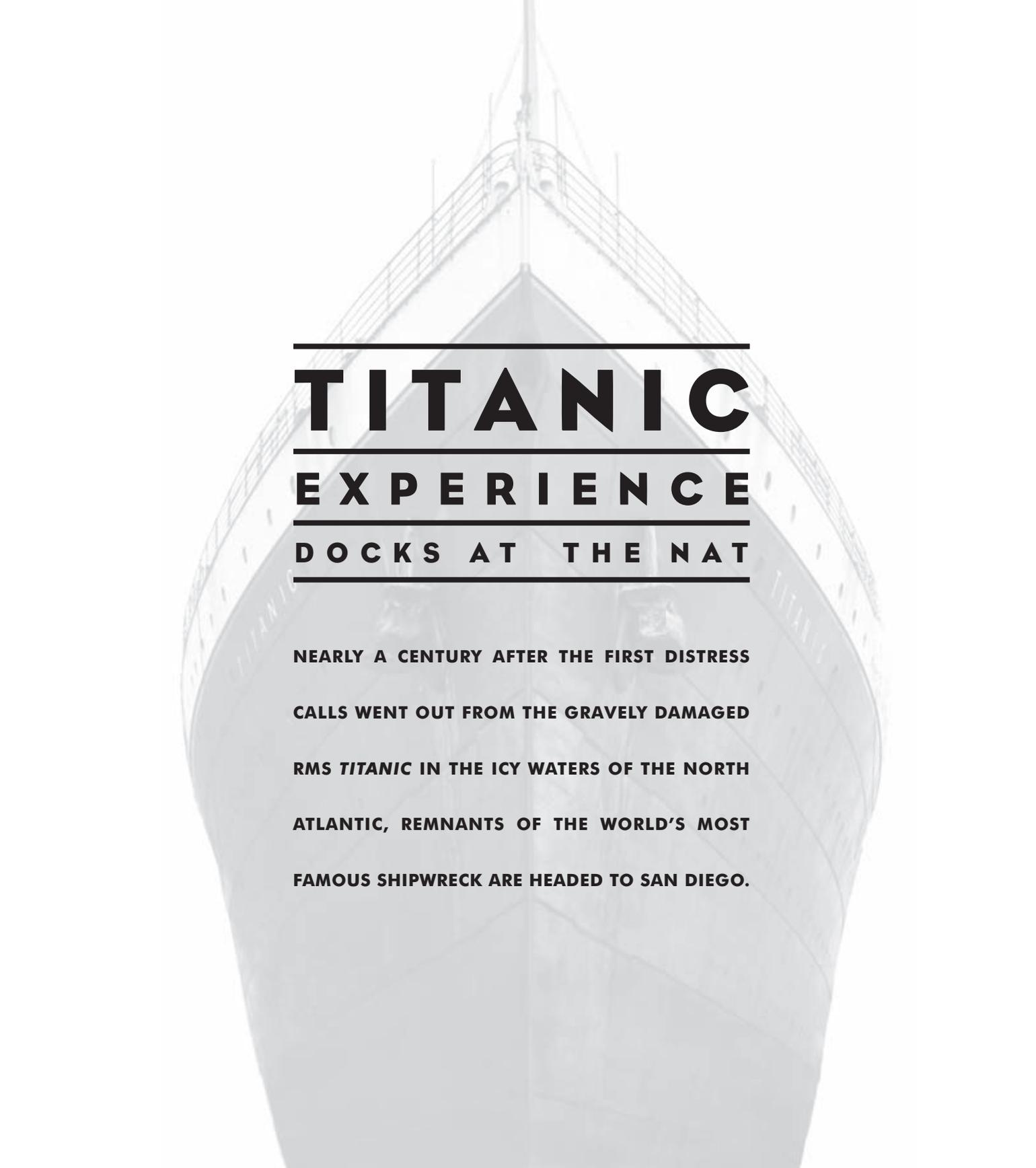
The insect in the photo appears, at first glance, to be some kind of wasp. It is actually the long horned beetle *Necydalis* (family Cerambycidae). The Entomology Department has been working on a statewide collaborative National Science Foundation Cal Bug project. The project involves collecting data on targeted insect taxa (groups), such as cerambycids, from collections throughout California.



## Herpetology

The 2011 field season is complete and the San Jacinto Centennial Resurvey is now two-thirds completed. The SDNHM Herpetology team—including Curator of Herpetology Dr. Brad Hollingsworth, Melissa Stepek, Laura Williams—and countless volunteers have documented 50 species of amphibians and reptiles. With photographic vouchers, the team has been able to collect thousands of observations useful in the distributional analysis of the biodiversity.





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# TITANIC

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## EXPERIENCE

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### DOCKS AT THE NAT

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NEARLY A CENTURY AFTER THE FIRST DISTRESS  
CALLS WENT OUT FROM THE GRAVELY DAMAGED  
RMS *TITANIC* IN THE ICY WATERS OF THE NORTH  
ATLANTIC, REMNANTS OF THE WORLD'S MOST  
FAMOUS SHIPWRECK ARE HEADED TO SAN DIEGO.

*Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition* will call the San Diego Natural History Museum home for a seven-month run starting February 10, 2012. Two hundred priceless artifacts recovered from the wreck site of this great Ship will be here on April 15, 2012, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragic sinking.

“This is a rare opportunity to view these historic pieces in San Diego,” said Dr. Michael W. Hager, Museum President and

CEO. “It took a monumental effort to recover the artifacts, including eight trips to the wreckage located 2.5 miles beneath the surface of the Atlantic. This exhibit combines that technical story with the human drama that makes the *Titanic* tragedy such a well-known event.”

How is it that objects as small as a hair pin or a half rivet from the Ship can capture the story of the 882-foot-long

doomed vessel, brought to life so vividly in the 1997 Hollywood blockbuster that bears the Ship’s name? These everyday objects on view in the Exhibition, displayed in recreations of actual rooms on the Ship, remind us of the over 1,500 individuals who lost their lives when 46,000 tons of supposedly “unsinkable” iron and steel sank to the ocean floor. A cut-crystal decanter bearing the flag of the White Star line speaks of fine wine and the





first-class passengers who settled for nothing less at dinner. The simple white cup from the third-class dining service might have offered hot coffee to someone of more modest means, perhaps sailing toward a new life in America.

Commonplace items like floor tiles, bench brackets, engine thermometers, telegraph mechanisms, cooking pots and hand-rail end pieces fill in the details of the tragic picture.

Visitors to the Exhibition will receive a replica boarding pass with an actual passenger's name and information. After viewing details of the Ship's construction in Ireland, they will walk a gangplank onto the

passenger gallery. There they will see recreated first- and third-class passenger cabins, including artifacts retrieved from the wreckage.

As they continue through the Exhibition, the mood will begin to change. Somber music sets a chilling tone, with a wall of ice reminding patrons of just how cold that fateful night would have been. Twisted pieces of the Ship and stories of lost passengers will be highlighted in the Exhibition.

The Seabed Gallery will show the technology of the recovery operation. A Memorial Gallery will list all the passengers on the Ship, and visitors will be able to find out if the passenger

listed on the boarding pass they received survived or perished.

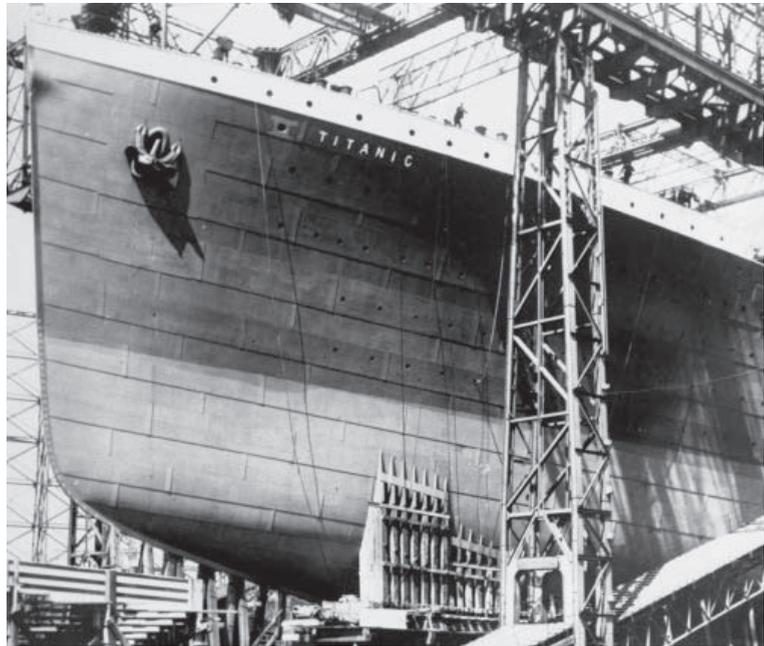
Most know the broad strokes of *Titanic's* famous story. Hailed as "practically unsinkable" when she sailed from Southampton, England, on April 10, 1912, the Ship was 882 feet long and 92 feet wide, weighing 46,329 tons. Although she carried 2,228 passengers and crew members, only 16 lifeboats and four collapsible boats were on hand for an emergency. (This was, inexplicably, more than was legally required at the time.) And when she struck an iceberg at 11:40 PM Sunday, April 14, some lifeboats were lowered only partially full. Many passengers failed to grasp that the damaged Ship was most

definitely sinking. When *Titanic* slipped beneath the icy waters less than three hours later at 2:20 AM the next day, the final count was made: 1,517 passengers and crew had died.

*Titanic* came to her final resting place at the bottom of the North Atlantic, 963 miles northeast of New York, and 453 miles southeast of Newfoundland.

RMS Titanic Inc., is the sole salvor-in-possession to the wreck site of *Titanic* thanks to a 1994 U.S. District Court ruling. RMS Titanic, Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Premier Exhibitions, Inc. RMST is the only entity permitted by law that can recover artifacts from the wreck site. The company's eighth expedition to the wreck was completed in 2010. The entire Ship was mapped using 3D and HD imaging, with the goal of virtually "raising" *Titanic*.

The Ship itself, split into two pieces, is too fragile to be raised, having spent almost 100 years under 6,000 pounds of pressure per square inch. Experts say the structure is likely to collapse, though no one can say when. This means that, although the great Ship has sat quietly in the dark for almost a century, conservationists are in a race against the elements to preserve what amounts to a time capsule



of the tragedy. The 5,500 artifacts recovered to date range in size from tie pins and tool handles to a 17-ton section of the hull. This is but a fraction of the remains of the majestic craft.

Hager said the popularity of the Exhibition and its educational power to draw people to the Museum makes it an important offering for the community and visitors. "*Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition*, like the *Dead Sea Scrolls* exhibition several years ago, stretches the definition of what most people consider natural history," he said. "But we believe that exhibitions like

this get people excited about the natural world and science and draw people to the Museum without compromising our mission."

Adult tickets for the Exhibition, which includes general admission to the Museum and 3D theater, will be \$27 with discounts for Museum members, children, students, seniors, military, and groups of 10 or more. Tickets may be purchased online, by phone, or at the Museum's Visitor Services Desks. For more information visit [www.sdnhm.org/titanic](http://www.sdnhm.org/titanic) or call 877.946.7797.

Lighting is an unsung hero in a museum exhibition. It's what makes the gems sparkle so brilliantly in *All That Glitters* and what helps take you 40 million years back in time to the Eocene diorama of *Fossil Mysteries*. And if we do our job right, you'll never notice it. But folks here are spending a lot of time thinking about lights, and how we can better serve our visitors and the planet.

helps SDNHM better preserve artifacts by reducing the number of foot candles of each lamp, and thus the amount of light exposure to artifacts.

Funding for this project comes from a variety of sources at federal, state, and local levels. The Balboa Park Cultural Partnership\* (the Partnership) was awarded a \$2 million Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block

# Let There Be Light

The Museum is implementing an ambitious lighting-efficiency upgrade in their exhibition galleries, reducing the number of lamps by more than half! These new lamps and lighting tracks are manufactured by Lighting Services Inc., an American company. Most lighting is imported from overseas, so the new lights generate a smaller footprint and support domestic business. The halogen floods that provide an architectural wash in the galleries will be replaced with LED retrofit lamps. The difference in lighting is not only a more aesthetic look, but it also

Grant\*\* through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for energy-efficient upgrades in Balboa Park. SDNHM is one of 15 institutions and 30 projects to receive these funds. The Partnership works closely with San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) to provide institutions with energy efficiency incentives and rebates. The lighting material installed for this project will result in a \$17,235 rebate from SDG&E for its energy saving measures. To help get this project started, a member of the Museum's Board of Directors generously loaned our up-front costs.

The halogen lamps currently in use add up to around 45,000 watts, and the new lighting will reduce that wattage to just over 16,000 watts. This translates into energy-bill savings of \$1,500 per month, at minimum. Perhaps as important, these changes will help reduce the Museum's carbon footprint.

Plans are in place to update all areas of the Museum that are adjacent to the atrium—*Fossil Mysteries*, the Museum Store, and the atrium itself, with some upgrades to the temporary exhibition hall on Level 2 planned as well, all to be completed by mid-2012.

As a test to see how these bulbs would fare in an exhibition space, in 2010, the Museum integrated 30 serpentine lights in *All That Glitters: The Splendor and Science of Gems and Minerals* along with hundreds of LEDs used for interior case lighting. The aesthetic quality of the lights combined with the huge energy savings, not only for the initial light-producing energy but also the reduced burden on the air conditioning system, helped drive the decision to make the switch in the rest of the building sooner rather than later. These lights also feature a 2.5-year lamp life, bringing a significant savings in staff time to maintain the gallery lighting,

since normally gallery lights must be replaced every six months.

Lighting for light-sensitive objects will still be halogen lamps that hold the edge with better color rendering and control of light levels—for now. Lighting is not unlike the iPhone—wait one year and the technology will be better, and cheaper. Just



imagine the possibilities for lighting *Habitat Journey*, three years away.

*For more information about saving energy and costs on the lighting in your home or business, visit <http://sdge.com/homerebates>.*

\*The Balboa Park Cultural Partnership is a nonprofit organization through which 26 arts, science and cultural

institutions in Balboa Park, collaborate to achieve greater organizational efficiency, innovation and excellence. The award-winning Sustainability Program is a community-wide movement dedicated to educating, engaging, and inspiring others to implement sustainable practices. The Sustainability Program manages

and tracks the EECBG projects in Balboa Park, working with SDG&E, City of San Diego, and U.S. Department of Energy.

\*\*The Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) is federal stimulus funding for improving energy efficiency. The dedicated \$2 million dollars is to improve energy efficiency in government-owned, tenant-occupied buildings in Balboa Park.

# Save Our Books!

By Margi Dykens, Director of Research Library

The Rare Book Room of the Research Library is home to so many treasures—natural history books dating back to the 1500s, art works, diaries, very old photographs, and primary documents from our Museum’s early history. These precious and evocative items will be the focal point in the exciting new exhibition planned for the remodeled library space. Don McLaughlin, Principal Architect with Place Architecture, is working with the exhibits staff and Library Director Margi Dykens to conceptualize how the current library space can be redesigned. Plans call for the addition of two upper mezzanines and an expanded entryway to accommodate these public displays while still functioning as an operating library for staff, researchers, and patrons.

Some of the extremely valuable and rare objects that visitors to the newly redesigned space will be able to see include our



*Flora Londinensis*

Audubon Double Elephant folio, published in 1860, with 150 spectacular chromolithograph plates of the birds of North America drawn by John James Audubon; a pristine copy of *Historia Naturalis Ranarum* (1758), or the *Natural History of Frogs*, by Roesol von Rosenhof, with what is considered one of the most beautiful frontispieces of natural history books of all time; and *Testacea Musei Caesari Vindobonensis* (1780) a lushly hand-colored catalog of the

Empress Maria Theresa’s personal shell collection. Some of our early maps, original watercolors, and historic photographs dating to the 1800s will also be featured. In addition to having the chance to see these rare works, visitors will also enjoy several interactive and hands-on exhibits which are in the planning stages.

The Library has been the beneficiary of donations of wonderful and valuable books over its long history, from such

philanthropists as Laurence M. Klauber, the Sefton family, Ellen Browning Scripps, and many others. The Klauber Library of over 2,000 rare herpetological volumes is considered one of the most complete herpetological collections in California, and there are many other collections included in our Rare Book Room.

As lovely as these books are, some of them have fallen into disrepair over the hundreds

of years that they have been in existence. Imagine the world events, catastrophes, wars, fires, storms and other natural disasters that some of these objects have survived, and it is not surprising that some of the bindings are falling apart, the leather is deteriorating, and pages may be loose or hanging. Despite the fact that in many instances the beautiful acid-free papers used in these books are in remarkably good condition, some books display damage from the infamous bookworm, some have apparent water damage or smoke damage, as well as suffering from normal wear and tear. Luckily, because of the superior quality of the paper used, most of the hand-colored engraved plates and pages retain their bright pigments, and it is often the exterior of the book that is most damaged.

These volumes are crying out for treatment, but only a specially trained book conservator can attempt to repair damaged books such as these. A book repair by someone who does not know the proper technique can and will result in more damage, as opposed to less. This latter fact is obvious from some of the books in our holdings which were “repaired” many decades ago by well-meaning but untrained library workers who used heavy adhesive tape to hold

book bindings together. This tape, which has now degraded and stiffened, has rendered the books virtually unusable since the book covers can not even be opened properly.

One of the more unusual books we have is a 3-volume copy of *Flora Londinensis*, which was written by William Curtis and published in the late 1700s.

Curtis wanted to publish a work which documented all the common species of plants found within a ten-mile radius of London at that time, and commissioned famous artists and engravers to illustrate his work. Unfortunately, not many of the public were interested in what they viewed as the “ordinary” London plants, which meant that his project did not sell many subscriptions. Because it was not well-supported financially, only a few hundred copies were ever created and published. Thus the copy that we have in our library is a rare work indeed. The plates themselves are in relatively good condition but the covers, with their beautiful marbled endpapers, are terribly damaged and in desperate need of repair.

We are extremely fortunate to have a new volunteer, Melissa Behar, who is not only trained as a librarian but also received her Certificate of Advanced Study in Conservation, Preservation and Conservation Studies at the University of Texas in Austin. She has begun surveying some of our books and is drawing up some conservation plans for the books, but even with her own hours of

**Making the effort to restore these treasures  
now may make the difference in enabling them  
to last another 200, 300, or even more years**

labor donated, materials needed for this kind of specialized work, such as acid-free papers, special glues, and book presses cost money. We are hoping that supporters of the Museum who also love rare books will step up to help with these expenses. It would be a sad loss indeed if our complacency today allowed these precious objects to continue deteriorating. Making the effort to restore these treasures now may make the difference in enabling them to last another 200, 300, or even more years—for generations to come!

*To learn more about how to make a contribution to the Library, please contact Eowyn Bates at [ebates@sdnhm.org](mailto:ebates@sdnhm.org) or 619.255.0172.*

## Corporate Profiles

### QUALCOMM: Champions of Science Education and Research

We are honored to recognize QUALCOMM for more than 15 years of support for our science-education and environmental-research programs. Through the years, QUALCOMM gifts have enabled thousands of students from Title-1 schools to visit the Museum through the Museum Access Fund, or have science workshops brought to their classrooms. QUALCOMM gifts have also supported the *Nature To You* Loan Library of plant, animal, and fossil specimens used by our Museum educators and borrowed by classroom teachers throughout San Diego County. In addition, QUALCOMM funding has supported the Museum's Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias (BRCC), including the BRCC's San Jacinto Resurvey Project. Through this project, our scientists are assessing the wildlife of the San Jacinto region 100 years after it was originally surveyed by a team from the University of California, Berkeley. The results of this thorough field work will provide a record of how wildlife has adapted to human development and climate

change, giving us insight into how we can support healthy land management now and in the future. Through its focus on areas of education and environmental stewardship, QUALCOMM is truly upholding its own priorities to create educated, healthy, sustainable, culturally vibrant communities.

### The McGraw Hill Companies and WD-40 Company: More Than a Decade of Science Education

We would like to thank two businesses for their long-time support of the Museum Access Fund. The McGraw-Hill Companies and the WD-40 Company have supported the Museum Access Fund consistently for more than a decade! The Museum Access Fund enables thousands of disadvantaged students each year to participate in the hands-on science learning programs provided by the Museum at no cost to them or their Title-1 schools.

The impact of science learning goes far beyond the subject matter being taught, be it *Cloud Science*, *It's Elemental—The State of Things*, *Tectonic Secrets*, or another lesson. According to the Association of Science-Technology Centers, out-of-school science programs promote increased

creativity, logic development, communication skills and reading readiness. With one-third of California teachers reporting they feel unprepared to teach science in the wake of pressure to teach math and reading, programs like those offered by our Museum are filling in the gaps (*University of California Berkeley, et al., Oct. 2011*).

In fact, Veronica Schmitz, a fifth-grade teacher at La Mirada Elementary School in San Ysidro told us recently that her students earned her school district's **highest science scores on the California Standardized Test specifically because of the science workshops they participated in at our Museum!**

## Natural Partners

Natural Partners are corporate supporters of the Museum who give \$1,250 or more in cash or product support each year. We are proud to be associated with these organizations and are appreciative of their generosity to all Museum programs.

Thank you to our new and renewing Natural Partners from the period of April 1–November 30, 2011.

### Diamond

Jerome's Furniture\*

### Ruby

Charles Koll Jewellers

### Sapphire

Barney & Barney Foundation  
Cox Communications  
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SmokeHouse Catering\*  
Terra Catering\*  
The French Gourmet\*  
The McGraw-Hill Companies  
The Ordovery Gallery\*  
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### Tourmaline

Allergy and Rheumatology  
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American Society of Landscape  
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Kyocera International, Inc.  
Kyoto Symposium Organization  
Merrill Lynch  
Welk Resorts

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Great Rocks, Inc.  
KP OnCall, LLC  
MocaMedia  
Nikon Inc.  
Rebecca's: A Coffee House\*  
The North Face  
Tree of Life Nursery  
Walk SanDiego  
Warwick's  
WD-40 Company

\*Indicates gift-in-kind

## Live Oaks Society

The Live Oaks Society is comprised of supporters who have made gifts to the Museum through their estate plans. These generous donors are providing funds for endowment or program support which will assure the future of the Museum.

Please welcome the newest members of the Live Oaks Society:

Anonymous (2)  
Mona Baumgartel and  
John DeBeer  
George Brooks-Gonyer  
Lois Day  
Mr. H. William Kuni  
David Dwyer Smith

NOW ON DISPLAY ON LEVEL FOUR

## BEST of NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW



Ordovery  
the ordovery gallery

### Foundation Spotlight: The Gerald T. and Inez Grant Parker Foundation

The Gerald T. and Inez Grant Parker Foundation truly fulfills Inez's original intent to support "the betterment of all aspects of life of the people of San Diego County." As one of only a handful of donors willing to fund essential operating costs, including salaries, the Foundation is a special donor partner to the San Diego Natural History Museum, as well as many other service providers in our community.

The San Diego Natural History Museum is grateful to acknowledge gifts from The Parker Foundation over the last 20 years that have been instrumental in establishing major exhibitions and education programs. Indeed, The Foundation's generous gifts contributed to the building of our Environmental Science Education Center classrooms during our building expansion in the early 2000s, and the salaries of its instructors, who now serve 160,000 students every year.

Major funding from The Parker Foundation also helped establish one of the Museum's most important installations to date—the core *Fossil Mysteries* exhibition. *Fossil Mysteries* was developed primarily with fossils excavated by our paleontologists in this region, taking visitors on a geologic and chronologic journey through San Diego starting 75 million years ago.

Most recently, The Parker Foundation helped to establish the two-year exhibition, *All That Glitters: The Splendor and Science of Gems and Minerals* (open through April 8, 2012).

The San Diego Natural History Museum salutes the founders and current trustees of The Gerald T. and Inez Grant Parker Foundation!

## Weddings ATtheNAT

The engagement ring was presented, the question was popped, you answered, "I do"... Now what? Well... just remember, we do, too!

Venue selection is one of the first steps in planning your wedding day and since you're already familiar with the San Diego Natural History Museum, you know that it offers a unique and beautiful option. Whether you're planning a ceremony, reception, or both, we can transform the Museum to meet the vision of your special day. You and your guests will share unforgettable moments while exploring multi-level exhibition galleries which illustrate the science and beauty of nature.

Imagine yourself walking down the aisle on the Museum's El Mirador Rooftop terrace with a picturesque panoramic view of San Diego spanning the downtown cityscape to the majestic mountains of the east county. After the ceremony and while you venture out in Balboa Park to capture beautiful wedding photographs, invite your guests to enjoy a cocktail hour and explore the wonders of *Fossil Mysteries* on the second level. Guests will then transition downstairs where you make your entrance into the Sefton Atrium

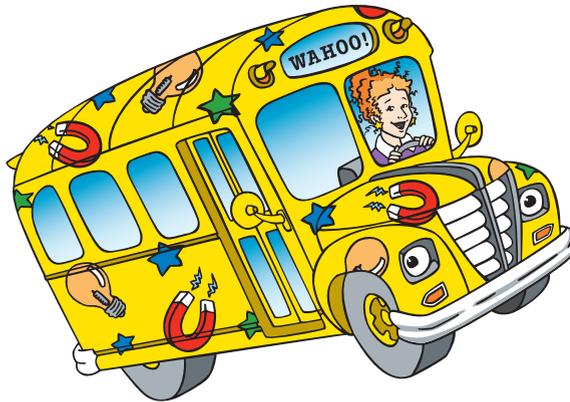
on the main level of the Museum. Now, you have the opportunity to enjoy dinner, dancing and celebrating this glorious time with your friends and family.

The Museum's Special Events team has over 30 years of combined experience with the confidence to ensure that your vision comes to fruition. From conception to execution, we offer support in every step towards the aisle. The Museum allows flexibility in vendor selection with no food and beverage minimums or additional admission fees. A list of Preferred Vendors streamlines the selection process by providing options from exclusive partners. Plus, parking is always free! Take the next step in your wedding planning by contacting us at 619.255.0316.

*Testimonial from Kristen Clemens, Bride, November 2011:*

*"We could not have had a more spectacular backdrop for our wedding! My husband and I wanted a venue that was "us" and the San Diego Natural History Museum was it. We were able to craft a really special day with the help of all the amazing staff at the Museum. Our day had everything: breathtaking views of Balboa Park, fun time with all of the exhibits and room to dance and eat into the evening. All of our guests continue to rave about what a spectacular wedding it was and we know it's because we had it at the San Diego Natural History Museum."*





### Wacky Science Sundays with Ms. Frizzle

Get ready to explore the wild and wacky worlds of mysterious creatures, fascinating habitats, and phenomenal science hands-on! Join us every Sunday with two free shows at 12:15 PM and 2:15 PM.

February 12, 19, 26—Whales  
 March 4, 11, 18, 25—Dinosaurs  
 April 1, 18, 15, 22, 29—Spiders

### Nature & Me Storytime

Calling all budding naturalists! Come enjoy an imaginative journey into nature through dynamic readings and visits to exhibitions. Storytime is held every second Thursday of the month at 10:15 AM. Open to all ages with a parent. (Recommended for ages 1–5.)

March 8—Behind the Scenes  
 April 12—Insects

### Upcoming Family Days

Each month the Museum partners with our scientists or celebrates an exhibition with family-focused activities and crafts. The fun starts at 11 AM and ends at 3 PM.

February 20—Adventures on the High Seas  
 March 17—Balboa Park Family Science Day featuring Botany  
 April 7—Dinosaur Egg Hunt



Visit the Alex and Elizabeth Wise  
 Museum Store.

Remember, as a member you get

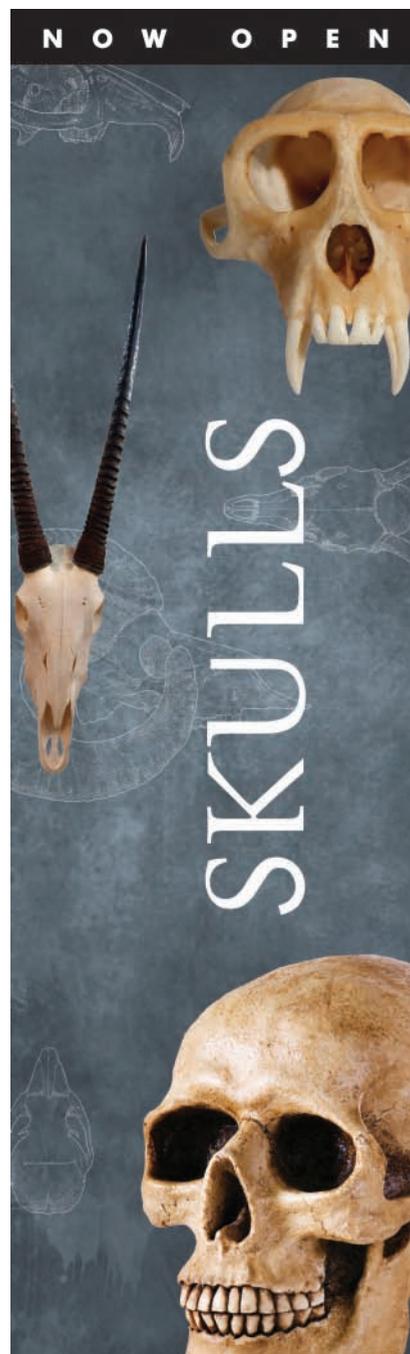
**10% off**

your purchases at the store.

The San Diego Natural History Museum would like to express its sincere appreciation to the following foundations and corporations which have recently supported the programs of Environmental Science Education Center (ESEC).

**Donors to ESEC  
April 1–November 30, 2011**

Barney & Barney Foundation  
Boys and Girls Foundation  
California Bank & Trust  
Cook & Schmid  
Cox Kids Foundation at The San Diego Foundation  
Hans and Margaret Doe Charitable Trust  
Samuel & Katherine French Fund  
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## VOLUNTEER NEWS

### Volunteer Spotlight: Mary Toomey

Mary Toomey began her association with the San Diego Natural History Museum in 1975 when she brought her four young boys to the Museum to see the dioramas that graced the halls. "Taking the boys out of the house was the only way I could keep it clean," she joked. She became a member that day and soon after, she became a volunteer.

Mary was fascinated with collecting specimens and sought out the Museum's scientists, sometimes bringing in her latest find for identification and possible inclusion in the Museum's collections. Her first specimen was a scorpion found by her son in Baja California. She offered the insect to the former Curator of Entomology, David Faulkner. At first he was hesitant but once he heard it was from Baja California (an area included in the Museum's field of research), he gladly accepted and gave Mary a tour of the Entomology collection. After that, she was hooked.

Mary made many trips to Baja California, always keeping an eye out for the unusual. David

Faulkner provided her with a list of desired insects, nets, traps, jars, and a letter, complete with the Museum's official seal, to testify that she was a volunteer collector for the Museum. The Curator of Marine Invertebrates also gladly accepted Mary's donations and welcomed her into the department as a volunteer. When she learned that Jerry Cosgrove, another Museum scientist, was researching a virus that affected pillbugs, she volunteered to collect specimens while traveling to Michigan to aid his research. No trip was complete unless Mary could bring back something to offer the Museum.

Later she turned her eyes on the Museum's administrative side and approached Dorothy Hester, Volunteer Coordinator, for a job that would keep Mary coming into the Museum on a regular basis. Dorothy directed her toward the Membership Department. Mary typed, organized, and sorted membership cards, and helped with many mailings. The Membership Director was so impressed with her dedication she gave her a part-time job

promoting membership at the Museum's entrance. Mary borrowed a tarantula and set up her station. She sold 27 memberships in two days, luring in the kids with her arachnid friend, and telling the parents that a Museum membership was the best bargain in town.

When membership became computerized, Mary switched her volunteering to the Education Department, helping wherever she was needed, eventually ending up helping in the Botany Department. Judy Gibson, Collections Manager, is thrilled to have her as part of the team of plant mounters—a dedicated crew who prepare specimens collected as part of the San Diego County Plant Atlas Project for inclusion in the Museum herbarium. "Mary represents everything I want in a volunteer," Judy says. "She is always cheerful, willing to do any job (no matter how mundane), reliable, and full of funny stories to tell. The Department, and the Museum, would be much less rich without her presence."

## Join us for Fossil Days!

Did you know that before Dr. Michael “Mick” Hager was a museum executive, he was a paleontologist? Check out this *Field Notes* issue cover—that’s him dancing with the dinosaur! Mark your calendars for a celebration of Museum President and CEO, Dr. Michael “Mick” Hager’s 20 years of service to the San Diego Natural History Museum. During the week of March 25–March 31, 2012, we’re planning a number of exciting activities—from a lecture to a Dinosaur Egg Hunt Family Day to a grand gala, *Fossil Ball*. Watch your email for Fossil Days details!



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