

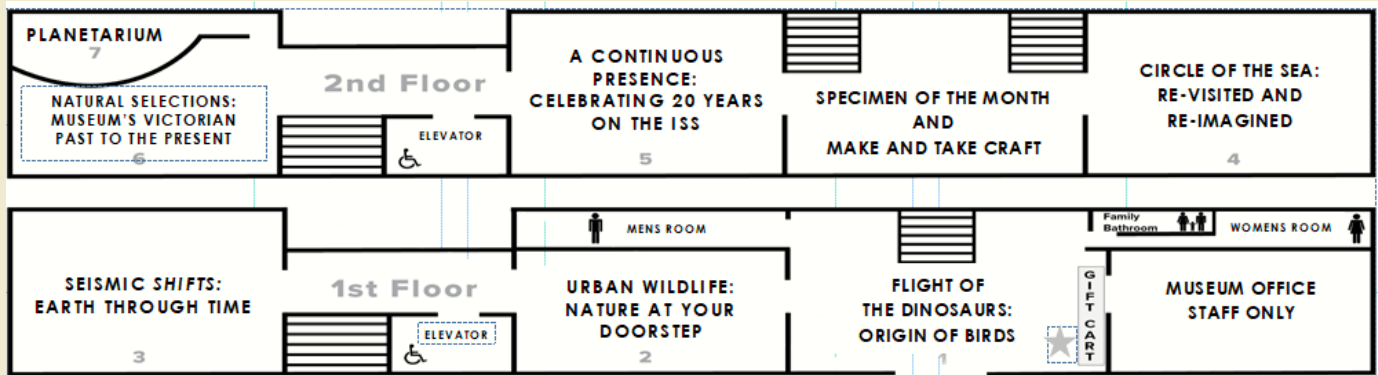
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY + PLANETARIUM



SELF-GUIDED TOUR



WELCOME TO THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY AND PLANETARIUM



Helpful hints for a successful Self-Guided Tour

- Explore the Museum using one of the quests available in the main lobby.
- We expect all adults to maintain supervision of their children while in the Museum.
- The use of strollers is discouraged as strollers need to be carried/lifted to enter and exit the Museum.
- No food or drinks of any kind are permitted in the Museum and Planetarium. This includes the Museum's lobby and entryway.
- Restrooms are located in the lobby on the first floor.
- Please ask a staff member for wheelchair accessibility-lift assistance.
- We welcome your comments and suggestions. A visitors' log is located near the Museum's front entrance.
- If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask our staff.

Did you know building renovations are underway at the Museum? Please pardon our appearance while we work to create these exciting improvements.

We hope your visit enhances your appreciation of the natural world and the diverse cultures that share it.



The Museum of Natural History

With its yellow brick facade, French Chateau style, and location on the highest of the Park's landscapes, this building is home to Rhode Island's only natural history museum. Designed by the Providence firm Martin and Hall and built in 1896, it was originally intended to house fine art collections. However, a donation of mammal and bird specimens from a Providence resident, John Steere, encouraged the sciences and prompted other donations.

These early collections laid the foundation for educational programming and by 1914 the Museum was hailed as "The People's University." Exhibits, nature study classes, field walks and bi-monthly bulletins encouraged the community to learn about the natural world with a hands-on approach. In 1916, a new wing was built, doubling the Museum's exhibits. In 1953, a planetarium was added on the second floor.

A brief history of Roger Williams Park

Roger Williams Park was created in 1871 after Betsey Williams bequeathed 102 acres of farmland and woodland to the city of Providence to be used for public purpose. A portion of the gift included land that was shared with her great, great, great grandfather, Rhode Island founder Roger Williams, by the Narragansett sachems Canonicus and Miantonomo.

Horace Cleveland, a leader in the Urban Parks Movement, created the design for the Park. It was intended to serve as an escape for those working in highly industrialized Providence in the late nineteenth century. Twenty years after Betsey's bequest, the Park quadrupled in size and daily attendance had grown to 15,000 visitors.

Comprised of more than 435 beautiful acres and offering a range of recreational and educational opportunities, Roger Williams Park still serves as "the people's pleasure ground" that Horace Cleveland intended, hosting family picnics, community festivals, weddings, and running groups. Each year, over 1.5 million visitors from around the state – and beyond – enjoy the same scenery and activities as past generations. The People's Park truly represents Rhode Island's rich and diverse history.

Take a closer look at Cleveland's original plan for the park on display inside the Museum.

THE GIFTS OF GUIDO NINCHERI

Guido Nincheri was born in Italy in 1895 and emigrated to Montreal, Canada in 1913. Throughout his life, he was a prolific artist known for his stained glass and frescos like the ones you see here in the Museum's lobby. These works were graciously gifted to the Museum by Nincheri in the 1960s.



FLIGHT OF THE DINOSAURS: ORIGIN OF BIRDS

When we hear the word “dinosaur,” we might immediately picture one or two specific animals.

However, dinosaurs actually represent a very large and diverse group of related animals that lived for millions of years in all types of environments.

Did you know there was a group of dinosaurs that were small, feathered, capable of flight and are still with us today- birds!

What are some unique ways you can find here in which dinosaurs, birds and other animals are related?



URBAN WILDLIFE: NATURE AT YOUR DOORSTEP



Human-designed landscapes occupy more land than ever before. While often discounted as wastelands devoid of nature, urban areas actually play host to a great diversity of plant and animal life.

Acknowledging the diversity of life found in cities is an important step toward understanding the impact humans have on the places they live and work. This exhibit focuses on the wildlife living right here in the City of Providence, and highlights the urban habitats in which they can be found.

Take a closer look at birds like the **Great-horned Owl** and **Osprey** featured in this exhibit, which can sometimes be spotted living in urban areas like Roger Williams Park.

What types of wildlife you can find where you live?

Featuring local fauna from the Museum's collections; imagery from Providence Raptors, urban wildlife photography by Peter Green; and videos from Greg Gerritt, activist, writer, videographer and watershed steward for Friends of the Moshassuck. NASA Satellite Imagery of Providence sponsored by the Brown/ NASA Northeast Planetary Data



SEISMIC SHIFTS: EARTH THROUGH TIME



Travel through time to discover Earth's vast history, from the dawn of our planet, to the most recent Ice Age. Discover how the formation of Earth led to its transformation into the habitable planet we live on today.

As you explore the exhibit, learn how the climate has affected our landscape over time. Follow the detailed time line to discover how Earth has changed over billions of years and how these changes affect our world today.

Check out the unique mineral specimens, as well as flora and fauna from the Museum's collection. Test the strength of a magnet to the sample of **Cumberlandite** on display. How does your hand compare to the print of the **Grallator** dinosaur or to the paw of a modern **Polar Bear** (*Ursus maritimus*.) Stand next to the giant **Brown Bear** (*Ursus arctos*) to see how you measure up!

How do you predict Earth will change over time?

Exhibit sponsored by the Brown/NASA Northeast Planetary Data Center & the NASA/Rhode Island Space Grant Consortium.

CIRCLE OF THE SEA: RE-VISITED AND RE-IMAGINED



Take a South Seas adventure without leaving the state! For thousands of years, the people of the South Pacific have used things in the natural world around them to create objects for use in their everyday lives.

Discover how wood and shells are formed into utensils for cooking and adornment. Learn how tree bark and plant dye are used to make unique **tapa cloth** like the examples on display.

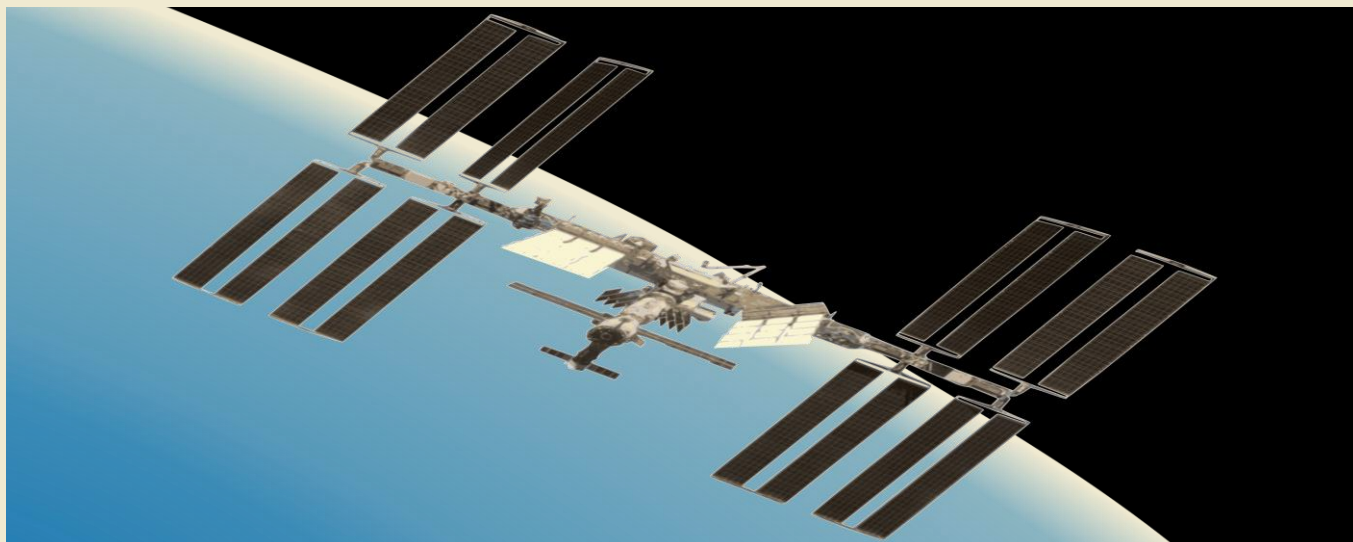
What are some other ways you can find in the exhibit that natural items have been used to make everyday objects?



Special thanks to Kirsten Vacca, Guest Curator, for her contributions and expertise. This exhibit was made possible through major funding support from The Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, an independent state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

A CONTINUOUS PRESENCE: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS ON THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

(Temporary Exhibit)



Orbiting above Earth at more than 17,000 miles per hour above Earth, the **International Space Station** (ISS) is the largest structure ever constructed in space. Learn more about this giant orbiting laboratory in this fascinating exhibit.

Did you know that scientists from 15 different countries have worked and lived aboard the ISS? Discover how some of these astronauts have studied the growth of living things in space, like the **Monarch Butterfly**, which was hatched from larvae on the ISS!

While in the exhibit, try your hand at **Plasma Power!** Streams of light inside the Plasma Globe are made from an electrically charged, glowing type of matter called plasma!

By touching the globe, what ways can you affect the plasma streams glowing inside?



This exhibit was made possible with a grant from the NASA Rhode Island Space Grant Program. Images are courtesy of NASA.

NATURAL SELECTIONS: MUSEUM'S VICTORIAN PAST TO THE PRESENT



Step back in time and explore the history of Victorian collecting through the Museum's rich and diverse exhibits. Today, the Museum continues to acquire new specimens, and its collections are just as important as when the Museum first opened back in 1896.

Specimens, like the fossil and shells you see in this exhibit, helped collectors and naturalists study natural materials in greater detail. Their legacy continues as we learn new things about the natural world around us every day!

Discover the remarkable treasures that are housed here, and what a truly unique Rhode Island legacy the Museum's walls encompass.

Which specimen in the Museum is your favorite?

This exhibit was made possible through major funding support from the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, an independent state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Thank you for visiting the Museum of Natural History and Planetarium

Your support plays a vital role in helping the Museum continue its mission to steward and interpret natural and cultural collections through exhibits, education and research. We hope to to inspire people of all ages and cultures to enjoy the natural world in order to better understand themselves and the world.

Please visit our website at
<https://www.providenceri.gov/museum/>
to find out more about our interesting and unique
natural history programs.

