

SBnature Journal

SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

FROM BEARS
TO WOODRATS

REMEMBERING
ERNESTINE
YGNACIO-DESOTO

WHERE DO
BUTTERFLIES
COME FROM?



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A NOTE FROM LUKE

President & CEO

The older the Museum gets, the more we hear that our impact has stretched across many lifetimes. We regularly hear from Member families in which grandparents, parents, and children all share the formative memory of pushing the rattlesnake button and feeling that first spark of curiosity about the natural world.

This issue's stories affirm the Museum's place as an intergenerational gem of our community. The Museum does not exist in a single moment. It lives in the memories we carry forward, the knowledge we safeguard, and the relationships we nurture over time.

In this issue we honor Chumash Elder Ernestine Ygnacio-DeSoto, whose work was a proud part of her family's multigenerational legacy of preserving and sharing Chumash culture. We tell stories of others whose connection to the Museum is woven throughout life, from educators who visited as children and returned as staff, to Denise Stevens, whose legacy giving reflects a lasting investment in our future.

Our new Maximus Gallery exhibition *The Collectors: A Life in Lepidoptera* spans centuries of butterfly and moth collecting. We hope you'll come see early illustrations paired with recently donated specimens, showing how fascination with nature endures and contributes to science across generations.

Our intergenerational impact reaches across borders in our cover story. In "Where Do Butterflies Come From?" we highlight our connections to families in Costa Rica whose work in butterfly farming strengthens household economic resilience. Their efforts also support long-term environmental sustainability, benefiting both local communities and future generations.

Thank you for being part of our ongoing living history. Because of you, the Museum continues to be a place where curiosity and love of nature takes root early, deepens over time, and is passed thoughtfully from one generation to the next.

Warmly,

Luke J. Swetland
President & CEO



Pieter Tanjé and other artists, *Butterflies, Moths, and Caterpillars from Dutch Colonies in the East Indies, the Americas, and West Africa*, hand-colored engraving from Albertus Seba, *Locupletissimi Rerum Naturalium Thesauri* (1734-65)

THE COLLECTORS: A LIFE IN LEPIDOPTERA

by Associate Curator of Maximus Gallery Sarah Monks, Ph.D.



Maria Sibylla Merian, *Rothschildia Silk Moth, Caterpillar, and Pupa on Seville Orange Tree*, engraving from *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (1705)

In 1699, Maria Sibylla Merian risked life and limb for Lepidoptera. Setting sail from Holland for tropical Surinam, over 4,000 miles away, she would return two years later bearing eyewitness studies of exotic butterflies and moths (Lepidoptera). Her subsequent book—*Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (1705)—turned those studies into ecological compositions showing these beautiful and diverse creatures in relation to their life cycles, habitats, and diets for the first time.

Now open in the Maximus Gallery, *The Collectors: A Life in Lepidoptera* reveals the impact of Merian's work, and traces the passion for collecting and studying butterflies and moths among naturalists, artists, and collectors from the early eighteenth century to the present day. Engravings from Albertus Seba's *Thesaurus* (1734–65), depicting specimens from his vast collection, show butterflies in neat rows, divorced from their natural environment, and devoid of the life Merian bestowed upon them. They mesmerize nonetheless thanks to their bold arrangement and rich coloring.

Color is crucial to the identification of butterflies and moths but fades quickly. Hand-colored engravings were key to the dissemination of knowledge, especially when created by skilled artists with scientific understanding.

Among such artists was Moses Harris, secretary to London's Society of Aurelians, perhaps the world's first entomological society. His extensive Lepidoptera collection enabled him to publish *The Aurelian, or Natural History of English Moths and Butterflies* (1766) which included 44 engravings, all "Drawn, Engraved and Coloured from the Natural Subjects" by Harris himself. Following Merian's compositional example, his view of peppered and red underwing moths brings insects to life. The book cost the equivalent of over \$1,000 in today's money, yet found plenty of buyers. Dedications to elite individuals decorate each illustration, advertising *The Aurelian's* genteel status.



Moses Harris, *Peppered moths and red underwing moths*, hand-colored engraving from *The Aurelian, or Natural History of English Moths and Butterflies* (1766)



Detail of Jacques Juillet, *Butterfly hunting and specimen preparation*, engraving from Jacques Louis Florentin Engramelle, *Papillons d'Europe, Peints d'Après Nature* (1779-93)

An illustration from Jacques Engramelle's *Papillons d'Europe* (1779–93) shows lepidoptery had become fashionable: a young lepidopterist—standing in open heathland yet dressed for the *rue Saint-Honoré*—elegantly leans in to capture a new addition to his collection. Lepidoptery was closely associated with display at home too. Whether regimented or playful, collectors' dazzling arrangements of specimens in cabinets influenced illustrators. Pieter Cramer's view of Asian, American, and African butterflies arranged like synchronized swimmers highlights this creativity, the visual impact magnified by a kaleidoscopic composition.

Lepidoptery may no longer be the height of fashion, but the passion for butterflies and moths remains. Many of the specimens in U.S. museums have been given by avid collectors, and this Museum is no exception. *The Collectors* pays tribute to four recent donors, showcasing the gifts and stories of keen lepidopterists Ken Denton, Tom Dimock, and Paul and Sandy Russell. Their distinct contributions have significantly expanded the Museum's Entomology Collection, which Sandy continues to catalogue. We hope this exhibition will inspire guests to look closely at butterflies and moths, and to realize—as so many generations have before them—the remarkable beauty and diversity of Lepidoptera.



FROM BEARS TO WOODRATS

with Curator of Mammalogy Ally Coconis, Ph.D.

How did mammalogy become your focus?

AC: The spark that lit the fire was an internship for wildlife management in Yosemite National Park where the focus is on human-wildlife conflict with bears. Sometimes I was talking to visitors, and sometimes I was shooing bears out of campgrounds.

Your involvement in education makes you stand out as a scientist. How did that develop?

AC: I had really enjoyed the education component of my work in Yosemite, so I was looking for more of that. Right after I graduated with my undergrad from the University of Utah, I started working at the Natural History Museum of Utah (NHMU). There was an opening in community outreach, and I took a role that had me tabling about 100 events a year.

You're interested in lifting the curtain on science.

AC: Absolutely. Like community science, which is such a great way to get people to care deeply about nature in their community—to allow them to get down and dirty and collect data with you.

How do you hope to contribute to our broader project of making more of our collection data accessible?

AC: My goal in the next couple of years is to expand collections-based research. Not just with people who are working in natural sciences, but also educators or artists, and perhaps even thinking outside the box to include medical use. When I was studying woodrats,

our lab had some peripheral connections to the medical world who were interested in the mechanisms by which woodrats process harsh toxins.

Tell us more about woodrats and their superpowers!

AC: They are everywhere. There are a lot of species with different niches. They're great model systems to look at things like evolutionary processes and mechanisms that facilitate diversity. The heart of my Ph.D. thesis was looking at mechanisms of species distribution for two species of woodrats in the Great Basin Desert. For each species, I mapped out their predicted distribution based on abiotic factors such as climate, and then went into the field to ground-truth how

their actual distributions mapped to these predicted distributions. Turns out the models were quite accurate.

A cool fact about woodrats is their role in preserving biological data. In the desert West, they will build their nests in the shelter of rocks, collecting a bunch of plant and animal material, like bones or other animal poop. Then they'll pee all over their nest, encasing these collections. That pee hardens and becomes kind of a protectant against the elements, which may preserve them for tens of thousands of years!

Woodrat nests have also been dubbed centers of biodiversity where microclimate conditions create great homes for many arthropods, lizards, other small mammals, and even snakes. I'd like to help people understand these kinds of hidden roles that small mammals play in an ecosystem. Gophers and ground squirrels may help speed up post-fire recovery through soil aeration. This is something I'm interested in exploring further with research.



Coconis conducts biological surveys with an NHMU volunteer.
Photo by Mark Johnston



Blue Morphos feast on overripe bananas. Photos by Kim Zsembik



Zsembik with Costa Rica Entomological Supply staff at CRES offices near San Jose, Costa Rica

WHERE DO BUTTERFLIES COME FROM?



The butterflies in our pavilion start life as Costa Rican caterpillars. Morpho caterpillars in their fifth instar are collected by hand and moved to the pupation area.

On any given day, there are about 1,000 live butterflies in the Sprague Butterfly Pavilion. You can watch them emerge from their chrysalises in Santa Barbara Gallery, but where did they begin life? The short answer is Costa Rica . . . but it's not just another global supply chain. Our connection is a way we can help build economic strength, community resilience, and ecological stability in one of the most biodiverse places on Earth.

Teachers and hobbyists often rear small groups of caterpillars through the pupal stage to adult butterflies. Dependably raising butterflies at a scale to fill the pavilions of the world is another story. Caterpillars and pupae are vulnerable to parasitic wasps that eat them from the inside out. Regulations that protect agriculture tightly restrict how butterfly species are raised and shipped. Exhibitors—often with their own conservation goals—

want to know butterflies were raised without harming the environment. It's a hard nut to crack, but it's been done by Costa Rica, which is the world's top butterfly exporter thanks in large part to Costa Rica Entomological Supply (CRES). Since 2022, the Museum has relied on CRES to supply the vast majority of butterflies in *Butterflies Alive!*

In March 2026, the Museum's Director of Guest Experience and Butterfly Wrangler Kim Zsembik visited CRES headquarters. What impressed her most was meeting the people behind the pupae and witnessing how butterfly farming intersects with the human experience.

A leader in sustainable butterfly farming for over 40 years, CRES provides a unique livelihood for many families in an industry that has helped shape Costa Rica's national identity. When Joris Brinckerhoff and Maria Sabido founded CRES in 1984, it was part of a dramatic shift across Costa Rica to diversify the economy



Zsembik surrounded by Morphos in egg laying/flying area at a home farm in Siquirres, Costa Rica. Photo by Jonathan Hoffman

out of an overreliance on extractive agricultural exports. The butterfly distributor became an innovator in the nationwide movement to develop new opportunities, many incentivizing environmental stewardship. As CRES Commercial Manager Sergio Siles explains, "We shifted as a country, the conservationist mindset that we have. It's a highlight of the whole country." Today, Costa Rica still exports many conventional agricultural products—it is the world's top pineapple exporter—yet its name has become a byword for ecotourism, making serious birders salivate at the mere mention of the cloud forest.



CRES coordinates the efforts of many tiny family-run farms. In the ultra-humid region that's best for butterfly farming, the primary economic opportunities are still working on large cattle ranches or plantations that grow yucca, pineapple, banana, and coffee. Butterfly farming yields a good wage, and people can do it right on their own small parcels of land. "Many people think that a butterfly farmer is this guy with a big piece of land," says Siles. Actually, "it's a guy in the backyard! They do magic there." And although most butterfly farmers lack formal science education, Zsembik notes: "They're also doing science," a group effort to refine the best practices in butterfly rearing.

"In butterfly farming, you're learning so much about how to notice nature, apply change, and see outcomes," says Zsembik. "These farmers are hypothesizing, they're taking notes, making changes

to different variables of their rearing practices. That is such beautiful science."

Zsembik says the farmers deserve credit not only for their daily work, but for making such a deliberate personal investment in the conservationist national identity. It takes about a year for farmers to meet the conditions required by CRES and Costa Rican regulators, before they can even begin raising butterflies. Farmers often make the commitment with their whole family in mind. "A lot of the time, they're choosing butterfly farming as an opportunity for all of their family to generate income," says Zsembik. "They can employ the entire family in this business," and for some, it's a way to keep their family unified and safe.

CRES's butterfly farmers grow a variety of plants to support their caterpillars. With training from CRES, they learn "to be very mindful of the products they use and

the care that they put into their own land," for the health of their winged livestock and their own families, says Siles.

Butterfly farmers sometimes feel frustrated that their efforts to steward the land—and the regulations they comply with to do so—are not mirrored by neighboring industries. Some butterfly farms are becoming surrounded by big plantations that only grow one crop, many owned by large multinational corporations. The need to spread is part of the cost of monoculture, says Zsembik: "They're not replenishing the soil, so they keep needing to find new plots of soil to start over." Some butterfly farms have reported to Siles that healthy-looking larvae suddenly died in patterns correlated with pesticide applications on adjacent

plantations. Agricultural operations can even apply pesticides with drones, which have been captured on video flying over butterfly farming land.

To compensate for the losses caused by pesticide drift, CRES hopes to expand its network and unite more small farmers in sharing best practices. They are always trying to keep their farming network "structured in a way that works for everyone," says Siles.

"Everyone" encompasses so much: the land, the butterflies, the farmers, the distributor, institutions like the Museum, and the people who experience living adult butterflies up close. "In choosing CRES as a supplier, the Museum supports people and ecosystems in Costa Rica," says Zsembik, "and in supporting our exhibit, you're making that choice possible."

The next time you step into our pavilion, we hope you imagine Costa Rica—from the incredible biodiversity of that tiny Central American country to the family raising butterflies in their backyard. Meanwhile, you can help butterflies in your own backyard by reducing your own use of pesticides—and help butterflies worldwide by being mindful of how pesticides are employed in the agricultural products you purchase.



These host trees are covered with mesh sacks to prevent predation and infection of caterpillars. Each tree can have 50–100 caterpillars. Below: To prevent parasites, farmers control where Morpho butterflies lay their eggs, providing only a small collection of host plant leaves each day.



Butterflies Alive!
opens May 23.



Top: These Morpho caterpillars are in their fifth instar stage.

Far left: Small farmers like Donald raise the butterflies CRES ships around the world.

Circle: Farmers and exhibitors come together at CATIE Botanical Garden.



REMEMBERING ERNESTINE YGNACIO-DESOTO

By John Johnson, Jan Timbrook, and Owen Duncan



Chumash Elder Ernestine Ygnacio-DeSoto (1938–2026) vigorously carried on the work of her foremothers in contributing to the knowledge and life of Chumash cultures. Her mother Mary J. Yee, grandmother Lucrecia Ygnacio Garcia, and great-grandmother Luisa Ygnacio all worked as consultants on Chumash language and cultures to the prolific anthropologist John P. Harrington. Thanks in large part to her family's own efforts, Ernestine lived to see language preservation become language revitalization. Today, Ernestine's nephew James Yee helps to lead the reawakening of 'alapkaswa' (also known as Barbareño Chumash, one of several languages in the Chumash language family).

Ernestine began to focus on her Chumash roots in adulthood. While studying for her nursing degree, she wrote a biographical essay about her mother for an elective. Her professor encouraged her to keep researching at the Santa Barbara Mission Archive-Library. There Ernestine encountered John Johnson, then a graduate student and not yet an anthropology curator at the Museum. It was the beginning of a long and productive research collaboration and friendship.

What started with that providential college elective course became a calling Ernestine would tenaciously pursue alongside her busy work and family life. She modeled for the woman

Standing proud to represent her ancestors in *6 Generations: A Chumash Family's History*. Photo by Paul Goldsmith



pouring water to make acorn mush in the daily life diorama here. She became a dedicated basket weaver in the Chumash style, drawn to the Museum as a hub for the revitalization of those traditions (led here by Anna Campbell, Curator of Ethnography Jan Timbrook, and master weaver Abe Sanchez). She exchanged knowledge with other Indigenous language speakers and linguists, sharing her impeccably accurate memory of 'alapkaswa'. Ernestine served as a trustee on our board and was a founding member of our California Indian Advisory Committee (pictured at right).

She collaborated with the Museum on numerous public programs—many organized by Kathleen Conti—and advised on collection policies. Ernestine worked with John to create a public presentation that became a documentary: *6 Generations: A Chumash Family's History*.



She gave the Sukinanik'oy Garden of Chumash Plants its deeply meaningful name. Ernestine went through the notebooks in which her mother Mary Yee had recorded and commented on her work with John P. Harrington. Ernestine's family was brought into the discussion of possible names in the 'alapkaswa' language. Everyone agreed on *sukinanik'oy*, meaning "to bring back to life." Ernestine said, "because that's what the Museum is helping us do with our culture"—the highest compliment we could wish to receive.

Ernestine remained intensely active even in her later years, despite declining health. She worked to preserve San Marcos Open Space and brought Chumash expertise and perspective to various projects at UCSB. She usually found a way to join us at the monthly gathering of Central Coast Basketweavers, where she would discuss current events with a mischievous and candid wit, and encourage experts and novices alike to keep on weaving. The Museum is not the same without her, but her work here will endure for generations to come.

From top: Ernestine reading stories here in 1990 (photo by Ivan Hunter), with John Johnson at his retirement party in 2023, and showing her work at an outdoor weaving session in fall 2020.



GENERATIONS OF LEARNING

Educational opportunities at the Museum—formal and informal—have a way of pulling people in. Meet some friends whose first contact led to much more.

Krissie Cook

I started at the Museum in 1995 as a teen participant in the Quasars to Sea Stars program, where I fell in love with astronomy. I'll never forget the day my supervisor showed me a newspaper clipping about the first exoplanet discovered. It blew my mind! That day I decided I would be happy working at the Museum teaching people about astronomy for the rest of my life. I've been a Teen Programs supervisor and manager, instructor for kids and adults, planetarium presenter, Astronomy Programs manager, and volunteer. I created the kids' planetarium show, our longest continuously running show. Now I get the opportunity to see my own child discover what a magical place this is. Last week she came home from her internship shift so excited I thought my heart might explode.



Top: Schoolchildren feel awe in the presence of the California Condor.

Left: Cook blasts off bottle rockets with Javier Rivera in 2008.

Page Hiller-Adams, Ph.D.

My science background first attracted me to the Museum. In 2012, I applied to be a docent, and ended up as a new part-time employee in the School & Teacher Services office! There was such a feeling of community and purpose there, and a belief in the importance of exposing children to nature. I've enjoyed the Museum as a visitor,

volunteer, employee, parent, and grandparent. I don't think I'll ever tire of helping children to truly appreciate the natural world around them. For example, in the Santa Barbara Gallery, I enjoy the slight gasp from the youngest children when they look up at the high-flying condor. It's great to provide moments of awe. I hope to continue for many more years.



THAT'S ME!

Amihan Franada

I visited the Museum on the end-of-year field trip for my kindergarten class. I remember Chad's bones and a butterfly landing on my shoulder. I became a docent in 2021, fresh out of undergrad and wanting to jump into museum work. A student I was taking through the halls said something like, "I don't feel very smart in my classroom, but I feel like

my brain is exploding here!" That really clicked for me. Museums have the power to make history, culture, and science tangible and accessible in a way that a classroom or college course might not. I want the youth in our community to continue having brain-exploding moments like that. Today I'm the School Programs specialist here.



Kathy Harbaugh

After being a science teacher and raising two children, I wanted to re-engage with natural history education. I volunteered as a Museum docent in 1983, became manager of School & Teacher Services in 2007, and after retirement in 2015, volunteered again. I love sharing the enthusiasm and excitement of young children as they are exposed to the natural world. I vicariously exposed my husband Bob to years of volunteering, and today, he volunteers in the Earth Science Department. He says of the natural world: "The more you know, the more you will revere it!"

Learn more at sbnature.org/education



ALWAYS IN MOTION

The Sea Center's Living Collection

If you spend enough time at the Sea Center, you will notice something delightful. Our living collection is as dynamic as the Santa Barbara Channel itself. It changes with the seasons, responds to ocean conditions, and follows the natural rhythms of life. Because of this, each live animal exhibit area offers an experience that evolves throughout the year.

This spring, one of the most exciting changes to Dive In: Our Changing Channel is the return of Giant Pacific Seahorses. After several years away, nine individuals now gallop through their habitat, curling their prehensile tails around seagrass and captivating visitors. As the only seahorse species found on the California coast and one of the largest in the world, they help illustrate how warming waters and shifting southern currents are bringing many marine species farther north.

Their return is also a story of partnership. After our previous population aged naturally and pandemic disruptions limited animal exchanges, acquiring new seahorses became difficult. A renewed collaboration with Cabrillo Marine Aquarium and their successful breeding efforts allowed us to welcome a new group and again highlight this vulnerable species and its unusual male pregnancy.

A charismatic Two-spot Octopus glides through its rocky habitat, shifting color and pattern through metachrosis, a process it uses to hide, hunt, and even attract a mate. Our smack of Moon Jellies shows how quickly ocean life can change.

These gentle drifters grow rapidly and have short lives, so the group on display is always in transition. Their soft bioluminescent glow adds to their hypnotic appeal. Around these animals is an ever-rotating community of tidepool invertebrates, small fishes, and seasonal drifters collected from the channel.

In Shark Cove and Intertidal Wonders, visitors can meet Swell Sharks, Horn Sharks, and other elasmobranchs which are friendly enough to touch. Swell Sharks can inflate their bodies to nearly twice their size to deter predators, a nifty trick. Occasionally we obtain permits to release them back into their natural habitat. Guests may also see

California Skate and shark eggs hatching, offering an intimate glimpse into local marine life cycles.

Our collection also features standout fishes such as the bright orange Garibaldi (the California state fish), and a California Sheephead that spent its early years at the Cabrillo High School Aquarium. When former student caretakers visited, the sheephead appeared to recognize them, an observation supported by research on fish memory.

New arrivals are anticipated in the future. Conversations with Sunflower Star Lab may soon allow us to display Sunflower Sea Stars and support education surrounding efforts to restore wild populations.

At the Sea Center, change is constant. Every arrival and life cycle milestone helps illuminate the science and wonder of the Santa Barbara Channel. There is always something new just beneath the surface.



REVEALING THE COLORS OF NATURE

Mission Creek Gala 2026

SOLD-OUT MISSION CREEK GALA RAISES RECORD SUPPORT FOR MUSEUM

The twenty-sixth annual Mission Creek Gala: Revealing the Colors of Nature was a vibrant evening celebrating the beauty of the natural world while raising a record \$744,000 to support science and education programs serving thousands of schoolchildren each year.

Guests arrived to a lively courtyard reception setting the tone for the night. Teens from the Museum's Quasars to Sea Stars internship program hosted interactive stations, sharing their enthusiasm for science and discovery. Inside Fleischmann Auditorium, attendees entered an immersive environment transformed by large-scale nature imagery, dynamic lighting, and sound. Giant LED screens surrounded the room with vivid visuals highlighting the richness of the natural world, with imagery provided by Larry Friesen, Ph.D. The experience was brought to life through the collaboration of Joy Full Events, Inc., SMI Audio Visual, and Hogue & Co.

Five sponsored tableaux anchored the space, each designed as a distinctive vignette inspired by colors found in nature. Together, the installations created a multisensory journey that echoed the Museum's mission to inspire curiosity and wonder through science and nature.

Museum Board Chair Matt Adams welcomed guests, followed by a seasonal four-course dinner from duo catering & events paired perfectly with donated Napa Valley wine. The lighting and imagery shifted with each course matching its color theme, culminating in a vibrant rainbow display for dessert. The choreography of food, light, and media reinforced the idea that color is both a scientific phenomenon and a source of joy.

Midway through the program, Museum researchers shared snapshots of their work. Curator of Mammalogy Ally Coconis, Ph.D., Associate Curator of Invertebrate Zoology Vanessa Delnavaz, M.A., and

Schlinger Chair of Entomology Alex Harman, Ph.D., offered insights into how color plays a role across their disciplines, from camouflage and communication to biodiversity and evolution.

The evening also elevated youth voices. Quasars to Sea Stars participant Diego Rodriguez reflected on how the Museum shaped his academic and career aspirations, underscoring the impact of donor support. Museum President and CEO Luke J. Swetland followed with a direct appeal that inspired \$386,000 in immediate giving. Guests concluded the evening back in the courtyard with a late-night bite and a shared sense of celebration and purpose.

Since its founding in 2000, the Mission Creek Gala has raised more than \$8 million for the Museum's school programs, including the Museum Access Fund which helps Title I schools experience the Museum through reduced-cost field trips.



1. Stacey Byers from Robertson Travel and Luke Swetland announcing the raffle winner with an image by Larry Friesen in the background
2. President & CEO Luke J. Swetland with Vanessa Delnavaz, M.A., Alex Harman, Ph.D., Ally Coconis, Ph.D., and Events Manager Aly Warner
3. Gala committee members Sheri Eckmann, Stacey Byers, Jackie McBride, Bobbie Kinnear, Tamara Jensen, Heather Hambleton, Caroline Baker, and Lucy Firestone
4. Sheri Eckmann and Francie Lufkin
5. Pamela and Greg Breedlove were the lucky raffle winners of a South American adventure.
6. Bob and Gail Young with Museum Honorary Trustee Palmer Jackson and his wife Susan
7. Guests were invited to wear white or their favorite color to help the colors of the room pop.



Photos by Baron Spafford and Larry Friesen



Photo by Baron Spafford

A WIN-WIN GIFT: HONORING DENISE STEVENS

by Philanthropy Officer of Legacy Giving
Andrea McFarling

It's a win-win." That's how Denise Stevens describes her decision to establish a charitable gift annuity (CGA) with the Museum she has long supported. Having already made a legacy commitment, Denise's latest gift reflects both her generosity and her deep understanding of smart financial planning.

After the sale of a significant asset, Denise was facing a substantial capital gains tax. By funding a CGA, she reduced her tax burden while securing a reliable stream of income for life. This thoughtful approach represents a clear benefit to her and demonstrates her long-term dedication to sustaining the Museum's future.

Denise's connection to the CGA program runs deep. As a key member of the Museum's Planned Giving Advisory Council, Denise has provided steady leadership and insight, even helping sustain planned giving efforts during a year-long staff vacancy. She has shared her expertise as a speaker for the Museum's estate planning webinars and workshops, helping others understand the

value of thoughtful planning and philanthropy. We are deeply grateful for Denise's enduring commitment, leadership, and generosity.

AMAZING RATES

If you would also like to make an extraordinary difference for the Museum, and are interested in learning how to increase income and reduce taxes, contact me from the web page below.

A CGA from the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History gives you the security of knowing you will receive fixed payments for life, while connecting people to nature for the betterment of both. A deferred annuity can begin at age 55. You become eligible for an immediate annuity at age 65, and for an IRA rollover to gift annuity at age 70 ½.

The fixed payment is a percentage of the original gift. You qualify for rates based on your nearest birthday. For example, someone closest to their sixty-fifth birthday would receive \$1,425 every year after funding a \$25,000 CGA.

Age Rate (%)

| | |
|----|------|
| 65 | 5.7 |
| 66 | 5.8 |
| 67 | 5.9 |
| 68 | 6.1 |
| 69 | 6.2 |
| 70 | 6.3 |
| 71 | 6.4 |
| 72 | 6.6 |
| 73 | 6.7 |
| 74 | 6.8 |
| 75 | 7.0 |
| 76 | 7.2 |
| 77 | 7.4 |
| 78 | 7.6 |
| 79 | 7.8 |
| 80 | 8.1 |
| 81 | 8.3 |
| 82 | 8.5 |
| 83 | 8.7 |
| 84 | 8.9 |
| 85 | 9.1 |
| 86 | 9.3 |
| 87 | 9.5 |
| 88 | 9.7 |
| 89 | 9.9 |
| 90 | 10.1 |



Members of the Leadership Circles kayaked on Morro Bay. Photo by Diane Devine

BECOME A SUSTAINING ADVOCATE

by Philanthropy Officer of Leadership Circles Diane Devine

Members of the Leadership Circles of Giving play a vital role in sustaining the Museum's mission. Their generosity provides invaluable support for our educational programs, research, dynamic exhibitions, and the care of our irreplaceable collections.

Membership in the Leadership Circles starts at \$1,000 annually for Patron's Circle Members. Sustaining Patron's Circle Members can contribute quarterly dues of \$250 or monthly dues of \$83.50—allowing you to support the Museum in a convenient way that best fits your lifestyle.

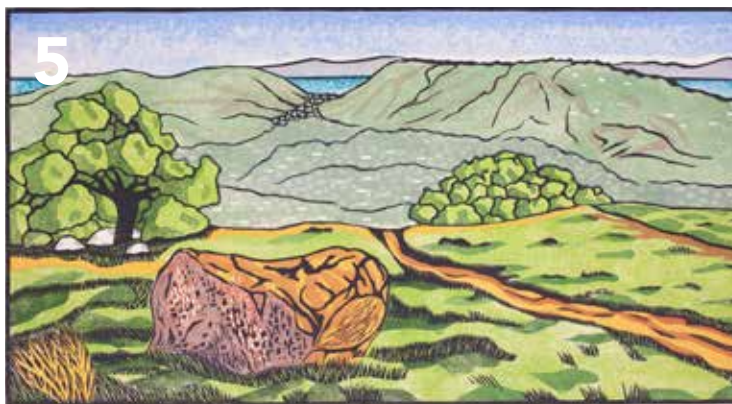
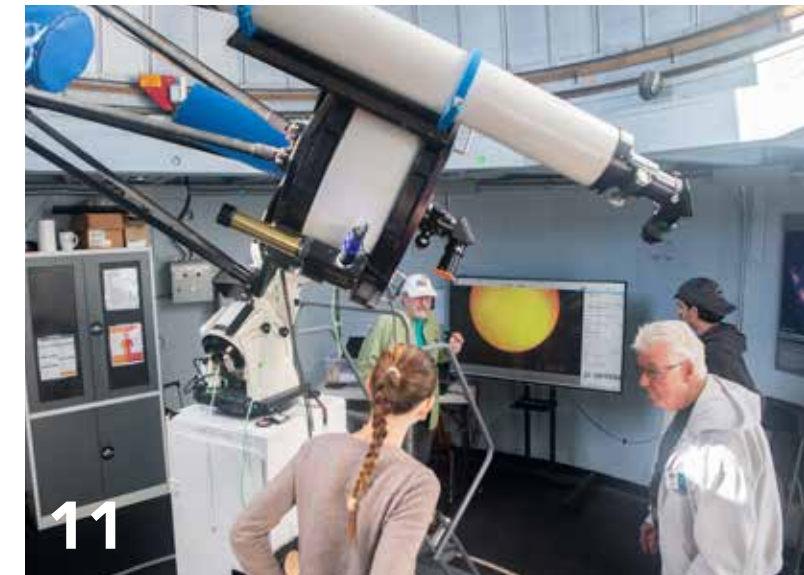
In recognition of exceptional generosity, Leadership Circles Members enjoy all standard membership benefits, along with a range of exclusive invitations to special events, behind-the-scenes Science Salons, and rare curator-led travel experiences called Explorations.

Explorations feature a wide range of unique natural history sites and regional museums and gardens. Over the last ten years, we've kayaked on Morro Bay and visited the spring superblooms on the Carrizo

Plain, Griffith Observatory, Anza-Borrego Desert, Santa Cruz Island, and rock art at Vandenberg Space Force Base. We are even planning a trip to Chicago featuring the Field Museum later this year.

Become a Sustaining Patron's Circle Member today, and together we'll work to inspire a thirst for discovery and a passion for the natural world, empowering stewards of nature for generations to come. Along the way, we'll enjoy a few adventures together!

MUSEUM LIFE



1. Volunteer Educator Mike brings Bird Habitat Hall to life for Brandon Elementary students on a field trip.
2. Astronomy Programs Manager Ila Jade Komasa previews a Members-only planetarium show.
3. Museum patrons Jay and Bethany Harkrider with Philanthropy Director Caroline Baker and President & CEO Luke J. Swetland at Cocktails with a Curator
4. Outdoor Educator Megan Vega leads a storytime in the Backyard.
5. Sara Woodburn's woodcut of San Marcos Preserve is on display in *The Living Print*.
6. Children and adults alike enjoyed Howls & Owls. Curator of Entomology Alex Harman, Ph.D., demonstrated a black light activity.
7. President & CEO Luke J. Swetland with Legacy Award recipients Marie Morrisroe, Shane and Genny Anderson, and Jan Hamber, and incoming Board Chair Matt Adams
8. 150 guests attended the annual Leadership Circles of Giving dinner where President & CEO Luke J. Swetland thanked donors for their support.
9. Associate Curator of Invertebrate Zoology Vanessa Delnavaz, M.A., engaged with guests about creatures from the deep at Cocktails with a Curator.
10. Guests at the Sea Center enjoy touching sea stars during Underwater Parks Day.
11. Astronomy volunteers and education staff check out the new monitor view from our solar telescope.
12. A young guest marvels at *T. rex* during the SoCal Museums Free-For-All.

SANTA BARBARA
MUSEUM
of
NATURAL
HISTORY

2559 Puesta del Sol
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

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For information about how to support the Museum, contact Director of Philanthropy Caroline Baker at 805-682-4711 ext. 109 or development@sbnature2.org.



Cover photo: Blue Morpho in the Sprague Butterfly Pavilion

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and Jonah Haas

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Questions?

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