



AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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**FOURTEENTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF LIVE BUTTERFLIES
TO ENCHANT VISITORS AT
THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY**

***THE BUTTERFLY CONSERVATORY: TROPICAL BUTTERFLIES ALIVE IN WINTER*
OCTOBER 8, 2011–MAY 28, 2012**

FEATURES BUTTERFLIES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

*****THERE WILL BE A PHOTO OP ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, at 10:45 AM*****

The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter, an annual favorite visited by millions of children and adults, returns to the American Museum of Natural History on October 8. Celebrating its 14th year at the Museum, this highly popular winter attraction transforms the iciest day into a summer escape, inviting visitors to mingle with up to 500 fluttering, iridescent butterflies among blooming tropical flowers and lush green vegetation in 80-degree temperatures. *The Butterfly Conservatory* is on view through May 28, 2012.

“*The Butterfly Conservatory* is a joyful, enchanting, and educational exhibition for both children and adults, and truly transports visitors out of their everyday lives into a magical setting teeming with color and flourishing life,” said Ellen V. Futter, President of the American Museum of Natural History. “That’s why it’s one of our most popular exhibitions. We are proud to present this magical and beautiful exhibition that offers an instructive interactive experience and a unique opportunity to observe the diversity of nature in a re-created tropical forest environment filled with butterflies.”

The Butterfly Conservatory

Visitors interact with butterflies inside a 1,200-square-foot vivarium, a freestanding structure aflutter with activity. Museum-goers stroll along a winding pathway surrounded by the varied leaves of tropical plants and trees and a riot of vibrant blossoms, including *Pentas* and *Ixora*. Powerful halide

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lamps shine down from the ceiling, simulating the sunlight that streams through a rain forest. Visitors outside the vivarium can watch through transparent walls as monarchs, zebra longwings, paper kites, and other butterfly species flutter among people and plants.

The conservatory's butterflies come from farms in Florida, Costa Rica, Kenya, Thailand, Malaysia, Ecuador, and Australia. Among the included species are iridescent blue morpho butterflies, striking scarlet swallowtails, large owl butterflies, and beautiful green birdwings. Because the average life span of a butterfly is only two to three weeks, roughly 500 butterfly pupae will be shipped to the Museum weekly for the duration of the exhibit, and the butterflies will be released into the vivarium after emerging. Other pupae hang in a case in the vivarium, giving visitors a firsthand look as adult butterflies emerge from the chrysalis and fly away only hours after adjusting to their new surroundings. Video screens outside the vivarium will also display a short film about this process.

Colorful educational displays outside the vivarium explain the life cycle of butterflies, the worldwide efforts to protect their diverse habitats, and the variety of butterfly species in New York State. Visitors can learn about interesting adaptations, from the colored scales that form butterfly wings' intricate designs to the intriguing relationships between butterflies and other animal species. (Monarchs, for instance, are toxic to birds.) Other panels explain how scientists rely on wild butterflies to gauge the health of an ecosystem and how the Museum's butterfly specimens offer a wealth of information to butterfly and moth researchers around the world.

Butterflies Online

Butterfly enthusiasts can visit the exhibition online at amnh.org by clicking on The Butterfly Conservatory link. There, they can watch longwings, swallowtails, and other species via a digital camera mounted in the vivarium and learn how to attract these magical creatures to their own backyards by creating a butterfly garden.

Organization

The Butterfly Conservatory is curated by Ward Wheeler, curator and chair of the Museum's Division of Invertebrate Zoology. The design director is David Harvey, senior vice president for exhibition.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (AMNH.ORG)

The American Museum of Natural History, founded in 1869, is one of the world's preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. The Museum encompasses 45 permanent exhibition halls and galleries for temporary exhibitions, the Rose Center for Earth and Space with the Hayden Planetarium, state-of-the-art research laboratories and five active research divisions that support more than 200 scientists in addition to one of the largest natural history libraries in the Western Hemisphere and a permanent collection of more than 32 million specimens and cultural artifacts. Through its Richard Gilder Graduate School, it is the first American museum to grant the Ph.D. degree. In 2012, the Museum will begin offering a pilot Master of Arts in Teaching with a specialization in earth science. Approximately 5 million visitors from around the world came to the Museum last year and its exhibitions and Space Shows can be seen in venues on five continents. The Museum's website and growing collection of apps for mobile devices extend its collections, exhibitions, and educational programs to millions more beyond its walls. Visit amnh.org for upcoming exhibitions.

At the American Museum of Natural History

The Museum offers a broad array of programs for adults, children, families, students, educators, and scientists. These range from special exhibitions to symposia, lecture series, workshops, and film festivals. Highlights include *Picturing Science: Museum Scientists and Imaging Technologies* (June 25, 2011-June 24, 2012), an exhibition of more than 20 sets of striking large-format prints, showcasing advanced imaging technologies used by scientists at the American Museum of Natural History and revealing once-hidden, intricate details of both natural phenomena and cultural artifacts; *Frogs: A Chorus of Colors* (May 28, 2011-January 8, 2012), an exhibition featuring more than 200 live frogs, including 10 species of colorful dart-poison frogs, *The World's Largest Dinosaurs* (April 16, 2011-January 2, 2011), an exhibition that explores the amazing biology of a group of uniquely super-sized dinosaurs: the long-necked and long-tailed sauropods; a year-round calendar of engaging and educational **public programs** that feature dynamic encounters with living cultures and authentic science; and **One Step Beyond**, the popular monthly party series where guests can dance in

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the Museum's Cullman Hall of the Universe to sets by the biggest names in techno, electronica, hip-hop, and indie rock.

Hours

The Museum is open daily, 10 am–5:45 pm

The Museum is closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Space Show Hours

Journey to the Stars is shown every half hour Sunday–Thursday and Saturday, 10:30 am–4:30 pm, and Friday, 10:30 am–7 pm.

Admission

Suggested general admission, which supports the Museum's scientific and educational endeavors and offers access to the Museum's 45 halls including the Rose Center for Earth and Space, is \$19 (adults) suggested, \$14.50 (students/seniors) suggested, \$10.50 (children) suggested. All prices are subject to change.

The Museum offers discounted combination ticket prices that include suggested general admission plus special exhibitions, IMAX films, and Space Shows.

- Museum Plus One includes one special exhibition, IMAX film, or Space Show: \$25 (adults), \$19 (students/seniors), \$14.50 (children)
- Museum Supersaver includes all special exhibitions, IMAX film, and Space Show: \$33 (adults), \$25.50 (students/seniors), \$20.50 (children)

Visitors who wish to pay less than the suggested Museum admission and also purchase a ticket to attend a special exhibition, IMAX film, or Space Show may do so on-site at the Museum. To the amount they wish to pay for general admission, they should add \$22 (adults), \$18 (students/seniors), or \$12 (children) for a Space Show, special exhibition, or IMAX film.

Public Information

For additional information, the public may call 212-769-5100 or visit the Museum's website at amnh.org.

Now you can prepare for your Museum visit by downloading the new **American Museum of Natural History Explorer App**, a groundbreaking enhanced navigation tool available for free from the App Store on iPhone and iPod touch or at www.itunes.com/appstore/. The Explorer pinpoints your location within the Museum and offers turn-by-turn directions through the 45 permanent exhibition halls, and features customized tours, a fossil treasure hunt, and social media links for posting to Facebook and Twitter.

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