MISSION
The Houston Museum of Natural Science’s mission is “to preserve and advance the general knowledge of natural science; enhance in individuals the knowledge and delight in natural science and related subjects; and maintain and promote a museum of the first class.”

LOCATIONS
- Museum District: 5555 Hermann Park Drive, Houston, TX 77030
- HMNS Sugar Land: 13016 University Blvd, Sugar Land, TX 77479
- The George Observatory: Brazos Bend State Park, 21901 FM 762, Needville, TX 77461

STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year Opened</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of AAM Accreditation</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square Footage</td>
<td>433,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services Delivered</td>
<td>2.3 million, 538,000 to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memberships</td>
<td>49,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 Annual Operating Budget</td>
<td>$35,420,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Members</td>
<td>65 (including 33 Emeriti)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>1,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active (worked &gt;12 hours)</td>
<td>945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant (worked &lt; 12 hours)</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eco-teams</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEBSITE (2018)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page Views</td>
<td>5,273,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase over previous year</td>
<td>2.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique Visitors</td>
<td>4,229,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average viewing time</td>
<td>1:11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL MEDIA &amp; EMAIL (2018)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>160,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook Likes</td>
<td>127,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter Followers</td>
<td>19,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram Followers</td>
<td>35,970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VENUES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museum District Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Cockrell Butterfly Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Burke Baker Planetarium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Permanent Exhibition Halls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Wortham Giant Screen Theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Land Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Hall of Earth Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Hall of Space Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Science on a Sphere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Hall of Life Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The George Observatory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Gueymard Telescope</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SUBJECT MATTER & COLLECTIONS

- African & Texas Wildlife
- Astronomy
- Energy
- Indigenous Cultures of North, Central and South America
- Paleontology
- Ancient Egypt
- Chemistry
- Gems & Minerals
- Malacology
- Temporary exhibitions that include objects/cultures not found in the permanent collections

### EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

**Students**
- Curriculum-based school field trips
- Science Camps
- Classes and Labs
- Outreach Programs

**Teachers**
- Trainings
- Events
- Workshops

**Adults**
- Distinguished Lecture Series
- Classes and Tours
- Travel Programs
- Day Excursions
- Cultural Dining Experiences

### ACCESS

- **Free Thursdays**
  - 91,344 free admissions

- **HISD 4th Grade Program**
  - Free co-curricular visits
**History, Purpose and Mission**

*The mission of the Houston Museum of Natural Science shall be to preserve and advance the general knowledge of natural science; to enhance in individuals the knowledge of and delight in natural science and related subjects; and to maintain and promote a museum of the first class.*

Founded in 1909, the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS) has been a powerful force for science education in Houston for more than a century. It began as a community repository for an assortment of minerals, shells, butterflies, animals and cultural artifacts. Today, HMNS has catapulted into the top tier of the nation’s museums, not only boasting thousands of square feet of constantly changing exhibition spaces, but also the Burke Baker Planetarium, the Wortham Giant Screen Theatre, the Cockrell Butterfly Center, and the Expedition Center. The Museum also includes an additional location in Sugar Land (HMNS at Sugar Land) as well as the George Observatory in Brazos Bend State Park. It has a rich history of hosting international exhibitions, including Body Worlds, Terra Cotta Warriors, Bulgari, The Dead Sea Scrolls, Magna Carta and Lucy’s Legacy.

Since its inception, the mission of the Museum has been to further science education. This purpose is carried out in every project, program and exhibition, making HMNS a leading educational institution in Houston and nationwide. As one of the most highly attended museums in the country, HMNS provides approximately 2 million services annually, which include over 500,000 services to children. The institution is a destination point for all ages, cultures, genders and socio-economic backgrounds with a variety of skill levels and interests.

**Need**

“Science centers and museums are uniquely positioned to raise awareness, understanding, and interest levels in science and the other STEM disciplines. They know how to provide life-long learning and stimulation to learners of all ages. The fields of STEM come to life through informal learning outside of the classroom, creating a passion for curiosity and risk-taking...skills that will be essential to face the challenges of a 21st century workforce.”

- The Association of Science & Technology Centers

Finding solutions for the myriad of challenges we face today monitoring climate change, curing ever-more resilient diseases, and ensuring access to clean drinking water, to name just a few will require a population that is highly educated in the sciences. Introducing all people, especially children, to the wonders of the natural world by captivating them with fascinating, interactive events and displays is an essential starting point.

The deficiencies in America’s science education and in the workforce must be addressed through creative and collaborative efforts of many institutions including schools, parents,
universities and corporations. Our Museum plays an integral role in that effort by providing learning opportunities in all facets of natural science using inquiry-based and hands-on methods to foster problem solving and analytical thinking skills.

**IMPACT OF MUSEUM PROGRAMS – MEETING THE NEED**

Science centers and museums specialize in nurturing critical thinking and analytical skills—two abilities that STEM fields require. An experience at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, whether it is viewing a Giant Screen 3D film, participating in a school field trip, or attending a summer science camp, fosters scientific literacy and positively impacts learning. Using hands-on learning, HMNS helps its visitors understand complex scientific principles and develop skills that will be essential to face the challenges of a 21st century workforce.

The **Association for Science and Technology Centers** conducted an extensive review of over 30 articles, books and research studies on science museums to support the statement that science centers are resources for lifelong learning. The research concludes that:

- Field trips and school outreach programs contribute to learning and support positive attitudes toward science.
- Science centers encourage interest in careers in science, mathematics, engineering and technology.
- Youth programs in museums support positive development.
- The hands-on approach that’s the hallmark of science centers enhances learning.
- Science centers offer significant support for schools.
- Science centers offer rich, social environments for learning.
- Visits to science centers leave long-term memories.

**MUSEUM PROGRAMS**

HMNS is dedicated to helping meet society’s need for a well-educated, productive population. The Museum provides educational programming focused on natural science, history and culture through collections displayed in permanent exhibitions, films, traveling exhibitions, comprehensive classroom experiences, lectures, and interactive and immersive environments. These innovative programs complement and supplement traditional classroom learning.

A full range of adult education opportunities is provided through lectures, cultural dinners, behind-the-scenes tours, travel programs, day excursions and hands-on classes. The majority of the adult programs are designed to complement the Museum’s special exhibitions.

**YOUTH SCIENCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS – EQUIPPING STUDENTS**

HMNS presents age-specific programs, including curriculum-based school field trips, science camps, labs, classes and outreach programs for children.
School Field Trips: Annually, the Museum serves students in grades K through 12 from home schools, private schools and 56 different public school districts in Southeast Texas. Students attend low cost field trips that are based on each grade’s interdisciplinary Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives and on the Museum’s permanent exhibit halls, and are rich in STEM content. The Museum provides teachers with the following curriculum material:

- A list of the TEKS objectives addressed by the field trip;
- A list of vocabulary words to prepare students for the field trip;
- A “knowledge hunt” to help students connect classroom learning with real world information; and
- Extension activities that focus on hands-on learning, critical thinking skills, research and cross-curricular lessons, so that students may extend their learning beyond the field trip.

H.I.S.D. 4th Grade Program: Since the 1950s, an H.I.S.D. collaboration sends students on yearly instructional field trips to the Museum. These trips are free of charge and include planetarium shows, hands-on labs and exhibition hall guided tours. This program is especially critical because according to the 2017-18 Facts and Figures issued by H.I.S.D., 74.93% of H.I.S.D. students are considered economically disadvantaged, meaning they meet federal criteria for free or reduced lunch. The same document reveals that 91.63% of students are Title 1, meaning that the students are from low-income families or at risk of failing. **Without this program, it is highly unlikely that these students would ever have a science Museum experience.**

Educational Summer Science Camps: Week-long, hands-on summer camp experiences feature science activities for children ages 6-12. Camps are offered at the Museum’s Hermann Park location as well as its Sugar Land location.

**Expedition Centers:** The Museum’s Expedition Centers are located at the Hermann Park location and at The George Observatory. A mission in the Expedition Center is an experience that engages students, transforming them into scientists, engineers or researchers on a simulated space mission. However, the true focus of the mission is on skills far beyond space science. Instructors use the excitement of space travel as a foundation for interdisciplinary tasks and life skills. All missions are tailored to be grade/skill level appropriate.

**Moran Ecoteen Program:** Each summer, more than 100 students, ages 14-17 years old, serve as volunteer interns, helping in summer camps and working as assistants to the Museum’s curators and educators in the Collections and Education departments.

**Science Lab Classes:** The Science Labs are used for grades 1 through 8 during the school year and feature specimens, artifacts and laboratory equipment. Students examine objects, investigate technology, meet live animals and conduct scientific experiments in five different, themed labs. Topics covered include *Time, Earth Science, Wildlife, Technology* and *Dissection.* We also offer *Labs on Demand* that are tailored to a class’s specific needs.
Early Investigations: Designed for students ages 5-7, *Early Investigations* consists of two parts: a hands-on classroom session and a guided tour of a selected hall. Eight topics are available and include *Texas Wildlife, Paleontology, Under the Sea, Native North Americans, Native Latin Americans, Africa, Egypt and the Insect Zoo*. Students examine and handle teaching artifacts and specimens, and participate in a craft activity.

School Outreach: When schools can’t come to the Museum because of transportation challenges, we bring the Museum to them. Outreach programs take HMNS educators into classrooms for a variety of presentations including astronomy, insects, Native Americans, paleontology, Earth science and Texas wildlife. Children can learn about DNA, volcanoes and the environment in *The Discovery Dome*, a portable, inflatable dome theatre. The Museum’s naturalist visits schools with live animals and specimens, providing students hands-on opportunities to explore the basics of animal life. The Museum’s *Junior League Science Box Presentations* are taken to students in economically disadvantaged schools.

Scout Program: HMNS offers classes to assist Cub Scouts, Webelos and Girls Scouts and Scouts BSA in obtaining merit badges, patches and pins. *Scouts@HMNS* is offered in two formats: single day Saturday classes and multi-day spring break and summer classes. A range of classes are offered at three HMNS locations: Hermann Park, the George Observatory and Sugar Land.

Science Nights: Science Nights introduce families to HMNS at Sugar Land, and is designed to encourage the targeted schools to enroll in the Sugar Land school field trip program, thus extending the educational reach and potential for learning. The purpose of the program is to highlight and link the importance of parental involvement in supporting academic success in the fields of science and social studies. The program is marketed through the schools. Students, their parents and siblings pay the greatly-reduced field trip rate to attend HMNS at Sugar Land venues on a special weekday night.

**TEACHER PROGRAMS - FOSTERING STRONG SCIENCE TEACHERS**

HMNS offers teacher training and classes that provide new approaches to science curriculum and teaching aids that encompass visual, audio and tactile components.

University Partnerships: HMNS curators and educators participate as teachers and advisors to programs at area universities including University of Houston and Rice University.
**Teacher Training:** Teachers from schools in Houston and across Texas attend science education workshops, in-service training and seminars presented by Museum staff. Programs provide demonstrations, presentations, hands-on classroom activities and lesson plans.

Teachers also expand their expertise through the following programs:

- **Maker Labs** are an educational concept where students collaborate in a physical space and use a defined set of objects to solve a particular challenge. The Museum takes the Maker Labs concept and tailors it to educate teachers on encouraging student collaboration to experience and learn STEM concepts. By educating teachers, HMNS is able to expand its reach to educate larger pools of students.

- **Educator Late Nights** are special programs for teachers where they visit the Museum after hours, learn hands-on activities to take back to class, tour Museum exhibits with trained docents, and enjoy a catered dinner.

- **Educators’ Previews** take teachers on special exhibition tours to explore the educational value of limited run exhibits. There is no fee.

- **The Educator Event @ HMNS** is a conference-style event that provides educators an opportunity to learn about the educational programming provided by HMNS and other museums, educational nonprofits and local organizations in and around Houston.

---

**ADULT PROGRAMS - LEARNING AND EXPLORATION FOR A LIFETIME**

Workshops, exhibitions, online learning programs, lectures, volunteer opportunities and travel adventures all lend themselves to older, more mature audiences. The majority of the adult programs are designed to complement HMNS’s special exhibitions.

**Distinguished Lectures:** Throughout the year, HMNS hosts a variety of distinguished lecturers to enhance patrons’ understanding of current exhibits or provide new perspectives on various scientific topics.

**Travel Program:** The Museum plans trips to different domestic and international destinations. Recent trips include Egypt to view cultural treasures, Germany to see unique dinosaur fossils at an excavation site, and Casper, Wyoming to view the total solar eclipse. Trips typically include curators or distinguished experts.

**Behind the Scenes Tours:** Curators and master docents periodically give exclusive, guided tours of the HMNS’s permanent and traveling exhibitions.

**Offsite Collections Tours:** Millions of artifacts and specimens are housed at HMNS’s offsite collections storage. Participants see old favorites no longer on display, like the shrunken heads from the Amazon, and new acquisitions that have not been seen by the public yet, including a giant African elephant.
Classes: A variety of hands-on classes exploring many natural science topics, from butterfly gardening to trilobites.

Cultural Feasts: Cultural Feasts offer opportunities delve deeper into the HMNS’s special exhibits through tastes of the highlighted culture and time period. While participants dine, a culinary historian illuminates the history and significance of the selected menu items.

EDUCATING THROUGH MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

With a diverse collection of more than 1.5 million objects, the permanent exhibit halls address a variety of subjects including paleontology, gems and minerals, malacology, indigenous cultures of North, Central and South America, Texas wildlife, African wildlife, chemistry and energy. The halls display extensive and unique collections, and include interactive and hands-on displays. Additionally, we present world-class, traveling exhibitions that bring major works of scientific and cultural interest from around the world.

PERMANENT EXHIBITS

HMNS offers school groups, families, adults, professionals, and teachers opportunities to expand their knowledge of the vast world of science through our permanent collection of over 1.5 million objects. In the permanent exhibits, visitors are provided countless chances to be intrigued, educated and entertained.

The Morian Hall of Paleontology:
Paleontology explores the history of life on Earth and paleontologists study the fossil remains of dinosaurs and other creatures, including their skeletons, shells and footprints. The Morian Hall of Paleontology opened to the public in June of 2012; it contains more than 450 fossils and fossil replicas, all in action poses—chasing, eating and escaping as they struggle for life. Visitors embark upon a “prehistoric safari” which provides a vivid glimpse into the incredible 3.5-billion-year story of life on Earth.

The Wiess Energy Hall 3.0: Now 30,000 square feet of the latest applications of scientific concepts and advanced technology in the energy industry, Wiess Energy Hall allows visitors to explore energy and its importance. The entire process of energy development is covered, from how oil and natural gas is formed, to the ways in which solar, wind, nuclear and biofuels can be used to power our energy needs. The hall incorporates interactive learning methods including computer graphics, touch screens, holographic video displays and virtual reality.

The Welch Chemistry Hall: The Welch Chemistry Hall brings science to life through experiments, interactive displays, computer touch...
screens, holograms, and other installations that provide a better understanding of chemical processes and the importance of chemistry in the everyday world.

**Farish Hall of Texas Wildlife:** This exhibit showcases the remarkably diverse biomes of our beloved Lone Star State. The hall incorporates dioramas on the Piney Woods, Oak Motte, Coastal Prairie and Wetlands, South Texas Dry Forest, Guadalupe Mountains and High Plains. The exhibit also includes kiosks that focus on extinct and vanishing species, invasive species in our state, and aberrantly colored individual animals. More than 425 specimens representing approximately 250 species are on display. Approximately 20% of the displayed species are classified under some level of threat by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

**Hamman Hall of Texas Coastal Ecology:** The Hamman Hall of Texas Coastal Ecology shows visitors how a healthy environment is paramount to maintaining and sustaining a healthy economy. The Hall focuses on the environmental characteristics of the Texas coast, as well as critical habitats, iconic species, concerns and impacts, recreation, and opportunities for conservation and restoration. Special dioramas will focus on oyster reefs, colonial waterbirds, and the Kemp’s Ridley sea turtle and its recovery from near-extinction.

**Cullen Hall of Gems and Minerals:** The spectacular Cullen Hall houses the world’s finest display-quality collection of gems and minerals, with more than 750 beautifully crystallized mineral specimens, including some of the world’s rarest and most beautiful examples. Walk-around display cases and fiber-optic lighting offer an optimum view of these dazzling treasures.

**Dorothy and Artie McFerrin Gallery:** The Dorothy and Artie McFerrin Gallery, located in the Cullen Hall of Gems and Minerals, opened to the public in April of 2017. Currently numbering over 600 pieces, the McFerrin Fabergé Collection is the largest private collection of Fabergé in the world—a treasure trove of objects reflecting the artistry of the Fabergé firm. Its premier exhibition is *Fabergé: Royal Gifts*, which explores the development of Peter Carl Fabergé’s techniques and inspiration beginning with the magnificent crown jewels of Catherine the Great.

**The Lester and Sue Smith Gem Vault:** Adjacent to the Cullen Hall of Gems and Minerals, the Smith Vault reflects the most sophisticated and highly secure vaults found in retail and private settings. HMNS guests pass through two-foot thick steel vault doors that frames a gallery filled with glamorous and captivating jewels. These jewels are displayed so that they appear to be floating in pools of light. A highlight of the Smith Gem Vault is the *Siren of Serendip*, one of the top five sapphires in the world. This spectacular gemstone was discovered nearly a century ago in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka. When found, the original, rough crystal weighed 2,670 carats before it was cut and polished. It now weighs an extraordinary 422.66 carats.

**Strake Hall of Malacology:** The fascinating and highly diverse group of animals found in the Strake Hall of Malacology includes more than 100,000 species, from barely visible snails to giant squids more than 60 feet long. These creatures are highlighted through models, fossils, dioramas, living specimens and hundreds of rare and spectacular shells.
**Evelyn and Herbert Frensley Hall of African Wildlife & Graham Family Presentation of Ecology and Conservation Biomes:** The African Hall has been a permanent exhibition at HMNS since 1969, giving Houstonians an opportunity to visit a part of the world that many would never otherwise experience. Unlike the traditional “menagerie” approach, this hall focuses on well-integrated themes of African wildlife ecology and conservation. Additionally, interactives and video films enhance the visitors’ exhibition experience.

**Hall of Ancient Egypt:** Mummies, coffins, pyramids and tombs are familiar symbols of ancient Egypt, suggesting a civilization concerned only with death. In fact, the Egyptians loved life so much that they tried to prolong it in death. Spanning 4,000 years of Egyptian history, the Hall of Ancient Egypt provides fascinating insight into this compelling culture.

**John P. McGovern Hall of the Americas:** The John P. McGovern Hall of the Americas celebrates the remarkable diversity and extraordinary accomplishments of the indigenous peoples of the Americas and the continuity of their rich cultural traditions. The magnificent collection includes rugs, pottery, beadwork, kachina dolls, pre-Columbian gold and other objects representing more than 50 diverse cultures from Alaska to Peru and thousands of years of Native American history. These superb artifacts are complemented by innovative reconstructed environments and hands-on activities.

**The Cockrell Butterfly Center:** The Cockrell Butterfly Center is a stunning, living exhibition that showcases hundreds of live butterflies in a rainforest setting. The central conservatory is a dramatic three-story glass cone filled with tropical plants and exotic butterflies. During a typical visit, one can expect to see 50 to 60 different species of the world’s largest and most colorful butterfly species, approximately 1,500 of them flying through the balmy air, hovering over flowers or sipping fruit juice—and occasionally landing on visitors.

**Brown Hall of Entomology:** Insects—bizarre, creepy, beautiful—are by far the most abundant life forms on Earth. Here you’ll encounter over 2,000 preserved specimens of insects and their relatives, complemented by colorful photographs and dioramas. The Hall also contains the Live Insect Zoo which is home to more than 30 different species of arthropods including myriopods, arachnids and others.

**Alfred C. Glassell, Jr. Hall:** Houston businessman Alfred Glassell, Jr. was a well-known philanthropist, but many never knew of his devotion to large species of game fish for sport, research and conservation. This exhibit highlights Tumbesian fish species including the world record black marlin caught by Glassell weighing 1,560 pounds. The exhibit includes over 40 specimens of game fish, representing over a dozen species found off the coast of Cabo Blanco, Peru, where Glassell landed the big marlin. Media interactives and labels complement the hall.
**Wortham Giant Screen Theatre:** The Wortham Giant Screen Theatre features the finest motion picture system in existence. Images of unsurpassed size, clarity and impact, enhanced by a superb six-track sound system, are projected onto a giant 60-by-80-foot screen that offers the ultimate movie experience. Giant Screen films also provide an exceptional educational experience by letting the viewer “feel” like a part of the action on screen.

**Burke Baker Planetarium:** The Burke Baker Planetarium allows visitors to experience the wonders of space while still on earth. The dome theatre offers the world’s most technologically advanced and realistic views of space and the universe. Giving visitors the feeling that they are traveling in space, high-resolution video technology projects images of planets, stars, meteors, solar systems and entire galaxies. The dome theatre is also used to train NASA Space Shuttle astronauts in star field identification.

**The George Observatory:** Located about one hour’s drive south of Houston in Brazos Bend State Park, the George Observatory is a satellite facility of HMNS. It houses the nation’s largest telescope that is dedicated to public education.

### SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

Special Exhibitions complement HMNS’s permanent exhibitions, or represent objects and cultures not included in the permanent collection. All exhibitions provide visitors with a variety of learning strategies that range from static labels, to computer and video-based technologies, to interactive components.

**Cabinet of Curiosities: Ferrante Imperato**

*May 6, 2016 – ongoing*

Museums exist to inspire wonder and facilitate creative thought. The modern museum has its humble roots firmly planted in the privately-owned collections of extraordinary objects from the past. These collections, called cabinets of curiosity, first became popular in the Renaissance and reached their pinnacle of popularity in the Victorian Era. As an homage to its own history, the HMNS presents an interpretation of the cabinet of curiosity. The exhibit allows visitors to peruse wonderful and peculiar objects up close and provides children with a hands-on look at the history of museums and collections.

**Death by Natural Causes**

*March 12, 2018 – September 2, 2019*

*Death by Natural Causes* introduces patrons to the range of “animal, vegetable and mineral” dangers that lurk around us. Through a collection of specimens, text and interactives, visitors experience what can cause a death from the natural world. Poisonous, venomous and toxic are terms that are clarified, and items people encounter on a daily basis form the basis of many
displays—mushrooms, spiders and even common foods. Urban myths are debunked as visitors travel through five general areas of rich graphics, compelling visuals and surprising specimens. 
Organized by the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Local support provided by the Harriet and Truett Latimer Endowment Fund and the John P. McGovern Foundation.

**Life in Stone**  
June 15, 2018 –
Gerd Dreher is regarded as the most talented carver of gemstones to have ever lived. His works—exquisitely detailed, realistic carvings of animals wrought from crystals of ruby, sapphire, amethyst, aquamarine, topaz, garnet, jasper and agate—are among the most highly sought after masterpieces of the lapidary arts. *Life in Stone, In Memory of Gerd Dreher* encompasses more than seventy of Dreher’s hardstone masterpieces created over the last five decades selected from private collections in North America, Europe and Asia. The exhibition represents a unique opportunity to view some of the finest masterworks ever produced by generations of artisans who have devoted their lives to the lapidary arts.  
This exhibition was organized by the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Local support provided by the John P. McGovern Foundation.

**Biophilia: A Dialogue with Art, Nature and Science**  
February 8 – September 2, 2019
*Biophilia: A Dialogue with Art, Nature and Science* is an extensive art and sensory experience that unravels human’s intimate relationship with the natural world. Artist, naturalist and New York Times bestselling-author Christopher Marley reveals the sometimes obscure beauty in nature through his three-dimensional work with animal, mineral and plant specimens. “Biophilia” meaning “love of life” is simultaneously explained and experienced in Marley’s immersive exhibit where the ancient connection between art, nature and science is explored. All of the organisms used in Marley’s work are either reclaimed (in the case of vertebrates and blooms) or sustainably culled (in the case of insects and oceanic invertebrates).  
Organized by Christopher Marley and the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

**The Art of the Gunsmith: European Decorative Arms from 1500-1800**  
March 11 – September 9, 2019
For over six centuries firearms have served as integral participants to a range of narratives in international history. *The Art of the Hunt* focuses on early sporting arms as vehicles of the applied arts, social interaction and technical invention. From finely chiseled steel and intricate inlay to mirror polished surfaces, firearms embody the most accessible, and often least discussed, of 16th through 18th century decorative art, and provide a glimpse into the lives of their artists. Through an overarching story of embellished sporting arms from 1500-1800, visitors additionally will engage with histories of technology, art and society.  
Organized by the Houston Museum of Natural Science in collaboration with the Museo Stibbert, Florence, Italy, with Contemparenea Progetti, LLC.
Museum of the Moon
April 19, 2019 – January 2020
In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the moon landing, HMNS presents this special exhibit. Created by artist Luke Jerram, the sculpture features 120 dpi detailed NASA imagery of the moon’s surface, using projection mapping. Lunar features, such as Tycho, Apollo 11’s landing spot and even the elusive “dark side of the moon” are displayed in stunning resolution. At an approximate 23 feet in diameter and an approximate scale of 1:500,000, each inch of the internally lit spherical sculpture represents 42 feet of the moon’s surface.

Trains Over Texas IV
November 2019 – January 2020

Trains Over Texas is a special exhibition which will utilize “O” scale model trains to teach visitors about Texas geography and geology. The exhibit will include 1,200 sq.ft. of loops upon which sixteen model trains will travel through various urban and rural areas of Texas including: Galveston and the Gulf Coast; Jefferson and the Piney Woods; Dallas/Fort Worth; Houston; Austin, San Antonio and the Texas Hill Country; and The Pecos River and West Texas. Realistic scenery will cover the landscapes for each region, and graphics and signage will detail the rich geology of each of these areas. This exhibition was organized by the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Local support provided by the Carruth Foundation, Inc.