

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS, APRIL – JUNE 2008

PHILADELPHIA— Learn the dramatic story of the brilliant 19th century friar who became the father of modern genetics, and get in on the U.S. Olympic Team Trial gymnastics action this summer, all at The Academy of Natural Sciences.

From May 24 through Sept. 28, Villanova University and the Academy present “Gregor Mendel: Planting the Seeds of Genetics,” a new exhibition that reveals the fascinating story (and the famous pea experiment) that led to the laws of heredity. From February 9 through April 27, “Ends of the Earth: From Polar Bears to Penguins” introduces visitors to the unique characteristics and wildlife at each end of the Earth.

In June, the Academy welcomes athletes and their families to Philadelphia for the Olympic team trials in gymnastics by showing off its own animal athletes. Don’t miss out on the fun at the oldest natural history museum in the Americas. The following activities are **free** with museum admission, unless otherwise noted:

“ENDS OF THE EARTH: FROM POLAR BEARS TO PENGUINS” February 9 – April 27, 2008

Journey from the North Pole to the South Pole and discover the fascinating (and cold!) worlds of the Arctic and the Antarctic in “Ends of the Earth: From Polar Bears to Penguins.” “Ends of the Earth” features interactive games and authentic artifacts to enhance the arctic adventures of both children and adults. Have fun identifying the unique characteristics of Earth’s polar regions. Rediscover polar expeditions through the eyes of great explorers, some with connections to the Academy. Walk and slide like a penguin and conduct your own cold response experiments. Understand the formation of icebergs. Learn about polar bears and penguins and the impact that global warming is having on their icy homes.

BE AN EXPLORER WEEKEND Saturday and Sunday, April 5 – 6

Be an explorer, just like Academy scientists of past and present. Natural history

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treasures are hidden throughout the museum. Explore the Academy and try to find them using only a compass, a map and your wits. Live Animal presentations at 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Make an explorer craft to take home.

TOWN SQUARE SERIES – CRAIG VENTER AND GENETICS
Thursday, April 10, Evening

Dr. Craig Venter, a pioneer in mapping the human genome, will deliver a presentation on human genomics as part of the Academy's Town Square speaker series. Venter is president of the J. Craig Venter Institute and former president of Celera Genomics. Previously, while at the National Institutes of Health, Venter and his team were credited with developing expressed sequence tags, a new technique to rapidly discover genes. This lecture is free and open to the public. To reserve a seat or for more information, contact Roland Wall, rwall@acnatsci.org or 215 299-1108.

SAFARI OVERNIGHT: ANIMALS PAST AND PRESENT
Saturday, April 26, 6:30 p.m. – Sunday, April 27, 9 a.m.

Before bedding down in the menacing shadow of *T. rex* or the cool gaze of a lion, have fun participating in quality natural science activities throughout the night. Find out if dinosaurs are alive today and meet today's relatives of ancient creatures. Naturalists will present live animal shows and interactivities. Explore the Big Dig and Fossil Prep Lab without the daytime crowds. Ages 7 to 14 and accompanying adult. For more information, log on to www.ansp.org. To register, call 215 299-1060. Fee: Academy Members: \$35 child, \$30 adult; non-Members: \$40 child, \$35 adult.

SAFARI OVERNIGHT: BEHIND THE SCENES
Saturday, May 3, 6:30 p.m. – Sunday, May 4, 9 a.m.

Take this rare opportunity to go behind the scenes of the Academy for guided tours of some of the 17 million plants and animals that make up the Academy's world-class research collections. Enjoy more activities with our naturalists before bedding down in the menacing shadow of *T. rex* or the cool gaze of a lion. Ages 7 to 14 and accompanying adult. For more information, log on to www.ansp.org. To register, call 215 299-1060. Fee: Academy Members, \$38 child, \$33 adult; non-Members, \$43 child, \$38 adult.

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ANIMAL MOM'S WEEKEND
Saturday and Sunday, May 10 – 11

Celebrate moms of every species as the Academy shows off some of the more nurturing residents of its Live Animal Center, home to some 100 animals that are injured and cannot survive in the wild. Live animal shows at 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Make a Mother's Day card for your favorite mom.

New Exhibition
"GREGOR MENDEL: PLANTING THE SEEDS OF GENETICS"
May 24 – September 28, 2008

Learn the dramatic story of the brilliant 19th century friar who became the father of modern genetics. Recreate Gregor Mendel's famous pea experiment to discover the laws of heredity and meet modern scientists on the cutting edge of genetics. See the real thing: Mendel's botanical specimens, scientific instruments, correspondence and gardening tools. Videos and hands-on interactive elements make the fundamentals of genetics accessible to everyone. Presented by Villanova University and The Academy of Natural Sciences.

ANIMAL ATHLETES WEEKEND
Saturday and Sunday, June 21 – 22

While Philadelphia hosts the U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Gymnastics, the Academy celebrates its own animal athletes. Meet the Academy's live animal athletes and see how you measure up. Are you stronger than a boa constrictor? Can you jump like a rabbit, run as fast as a fox? Live Animal presentations at 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. both days. Make an animal craft to take home.

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The Academy is located at 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway and is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and weekends until 5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for children ages 3-12, seniors, college students with I.D. and military personnel, and free for Members and children under 3. There is an additional \$2 entry fee for "Butterflies!"

The Academy of Natural Sciences, the oldest natural science research museum in the Americas, is a world leader in biodiversity and environmental research. The mission of the Academy is the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences.