

# THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES

of DREXEL UNIVERSITY

## news



### ***Everything Under the Sun: New Photographs of Academy Specimens by Rosamond Purcell Opens March 3***

**PHILADELPHIA (February 21, 2012)** – Normally, the gaping skulls, jarred rats, flightless birds, and delicate insects repose in climate-controlled cabinets high above Logan Square where they are available to researchers and protected from the damaging effects of sunlight. Rosamond Purcell had other ideas.

The Boston photographer envisioned the world-renowned research specimens at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University bathed in natural light, their oddities, beauty and secrets revealed—literally warts and all. An exhibit of Purcell’s stunning color photographs called *Everything Under the Sun: New Photographs of Academy Specimens by Rosamond Purcell* opens Saturday, March 3, in the Academy’s Art of Science Gallery.

Setting up the shots last year was a feat in itself. Once she selected the animals, fossils, plants, and artifacts that inspired her from a pool of 18 million candidates, Academy curators and collection managers hauled them up to the roof of the six-story museum. But only on those days when the light was just right, and it wasn’t raining. It took three week-long visits to capture what she wanted, and the results are worth it.

“There are these wonderful dramatic shadows and highlighted details that one wouldn’t normally notice,” said acting Exhibits Director Jennifer Sontchi, who co-curated the exhibit with Academy Senior Fellow Robert M. Peck.

On view through May 20, the exhibit consists of about 20 photographs that have never been put on display before. Some will appear in the newly published first complete history of the Academy called *A Glorious Enterprise: The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia and the Making of American Science*, by Peck and historian Patricia Tyson Stroud. Purcell was the official photographer for the book, published on the occasion of the Academy’s Bicentennial this year.

*Everything Under the Sun* is free with museum admission and open during regular museum hours.

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Two images are available to download at: <http://www.ansp.org/press/photos.php>

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*Founded in 1812, the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University is America’s oldest natural history museum and a world leader in biodiversity and environmental research. For 200 years, the Academy has carried out its mission to encourage and cultivate the sciences, exploring the remarkable diversity of our natural world and sharing these discoveries with the public through innovative exhibits, publications, and educational programming.*

*HOURS: Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. ADMISSION: \$12 adults; \$10 children 3-12, seniors, college students, and military personnel; free for members and children under 3. \$2 fee for Butterflies! PHONE: 215-299-1000*