



McCLUNG MUSEUM
of Natural History and Culture

QUARTERLY

Issue No. 10 | May 2018

Letter from the Director



Over the past three years, Coordinator of Academic Programs Lindsey Gharavi built a program that annually engages over 2,500 students in object-based learning at the museum. Sadly, Lindsey has stepped down due to health issues, and a search is in process. I extend my sincere thanks for all she has done and wish her the best.

More thanks go to educator Leslie Chang Jantz for the recent outreach to Spanish-speaking families in the Lonsdale community, which has enabled them to experience the many wonders of the museum.

In February, the museum conducted its first collections deaccession. The online auction of furniture and decorative arts was a success, and the proceeds went directly to an acquisitions fund to strategically acquire objects that support the mission of the museum.

Finally, I continue to be impressed by the curators of our research collections and their efforts to share data with hundreds of researchers and students.

Jefferson Chapman, Director

On the front cover: Mini-exhibition *Prints that Kill: Poisonous Plants and Animals*, opens on April 29. John James Audubon (American, 1785–1851) depicts the deadly coral snake, Plate 41 from *The Birds of America...*, Hand-colored lithograph, Gift of Ardath and Joel Rynning, 1996.5.51.

Special Exhibition: *Prints That Kill* Selections from the McClung's Natural History Print Collections

A mini-exhibition of prints exploring poison in nature is currently on view in the museum's pull-out cases. The selection of 27 prints and a book features poisonous animals and plants, including the well-known rattlesnake and the more obscure manchineel tree, whose fruit is also known as the "death apple."

Installed as a companion to the museum's current special exhibition, *Pick Your Poison: Intoxicating Pleasures and Medical Prescriptions*, the exhibition explores the many guises of poison in the natural history world. From venomous snakes, to birds whose flesh becomes deadly when they eat poisonous plants, to the many toxic plants that can be used as medicine or food but can also kill if not processed or gathered correctly, the exhibition points out how thousands of years of trial and error has kept humans safe in the natural world.

All of the prints are drawn from the museum's extensive collection of natural history prints and include works by well-known artists such as John James Audubon (American, 1785–1851) and Mark Catesby (British, 1683–1749) but also lesser-known naturalists like Johann Matthäus Bechstein (German, 1757–1822).

Today, as humans have less and less contact with the natural world, it is our ignorance about poisonous plants and animals, rather than the living things themselves, that poses the biggest threat to our well-being.



The poisonous manchineel tree in Mark Catesby's *Mancaneel Tree, Mistletoe, Butterfly*, 1743, Plate 95 from *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands*, Vol. 2, Hand-colored engraving, Gift of Douglas S. Phillips, 2013.7.1.

The museum recently welcomed almost 300 visitors at a Family Fun Day celebrating Charles Darwin's birthday and his contributions to science.



Support Free Community Programming

Your membership to the McClung Museum supports free community programs for thousands of East Tennesseans each year. For more information, call 865-974-2143 or visit tiny.utk.edu/mcclunggiving.

Research at McClung



An archaeology student examines prehistoric paint recipes using museum collections.

During the Mississippian period (c. 1000–1600 CE) in the Southeast, paint, or more appropriately, color, became prominent in the archaeological record and can be found on a variety of media including ceramics, statuary, rock and cave art, structures, the body, and even mounds that were “painted” with colored earth.

To obtain both the chemical and the mineralogical constituents of paint, UT archaeology PhD candidate Sierra Bow is using two nondestructive analytical instruments—a Portable X-Ray Fluorescence Spectrometer (PXRF) and a Fiber Optic Reflectance Spectrometer—to examine red, yellow, black, and white paints from ceramics, a painted wall fragment, and statuary in the museum’s collections.

Bow’s preliminary results indicate that paint recipes in certain contexts are very simple, consisting of a primary colorant mixed with water to produce a liquid paint that was then applied to the media. Since color is symbolically involved in expressions of religion in the observable world, comprehending the physical, chemical, and mineral properties of painted archaeological materials is essential for understanding how they were made and used. Bow intends on growing her data set on prehistoric paints and combining it with contextual information to reveal how paint fits into the Mississippian culture of this region. Her work is an important example of how the museum’s collections can safely be used to help reveal important information about the archaeological record.

New Acquisition: Catesby Passenger Pigeon

Thanks to the Ardath and Joel E. Rynning Museum Acquisition Fund, a bequest that enables the purchase of ornithological prints and art, the museum has acquired a hand-colored copper plate engraving of a passenger pigeon by renowned natural historian Mark Catesby (British, 1683–1749).

The *Pigeon of Passage* is plate 23 from Volume I of Catesby’s *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands, New Edition, 1748–1756*, revised by George Edwards. The new edition was printed from the original copper plates of the first edition (1731–1743), and the plates are generally more colorful. The museum adds this print to the more than 80 Catesby prints in its permanent collection.

The once abundant passenger pigeon became extinct in 1914. The Catesby print is an important companion piece to the museum’s taxidermied passenger pigeon specimen, which is often used in education programs, including recent university coursework on environmental ethics.



The new print, *The Pigeon of Passage*, 1748–1757, by Mark Catesby, 2018.1.1 appears alongside the museum’s taxidermied passenger pigeon specimen, 0000.99.574.

Community Engagement

Professor Engages History Students in History of War with Museum Objects

The Department of History's Lindsay Young Professor, Vejas Liulevicius, partnered with the museum to use collection objects in his class, *Europe in the Age of Total War, 1900–2000*.

The class explores how World War I, World War II, and the Cold War have all re-shaped 20th-century Europe. War medals, propaganda materials, a helmet, and a gas mask were on view during lectures, and Liulevicius notes how they provoked conversation. "Teaching with museum objects is so rewarding for me because they are not just exemplars, but rather they are doorways into the past," he says.

The class is a prime example of how museum collections can be integrated into UT's teaching and learning.



Happy 209th Birthday, Charles Darwin!

This year's celebration of Charles Darwin's birthday expanded to include local families and UT students. The event was incorporated into February's Family Fun Day and offered tours of the Human Origins Gallery, guided activities, scavenger hunts, and, of course, cake and punch.

By expanding the program, the museum seeks to empower members of the general public to appreciate Darwin's accomplishments through engaging, family-friendly opportunities to explore complex scientific concepts. The event was organized in collaboration with graduate students from the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences and welcomed almost 300 visitors.

2018 Civil War Lecture Series Wraps Up

The museum welcomed over 400 attendees for its annual Civil War Lecture Series, led by Civil War Curator Joan Markel. It began in January and wrapped up in April with a talk about the experiences of Knoxville soldiers and civilians during the war. The four lectures focused on Knoxville Civil War history and brought in several special guest speakers, including Blount Mansion Executive Director David E. Hearn and Steve Dean, McClung Museum and Knoxville Civil War Roundtable board member.



In the Spotlight: Tom Schirtz



Tom Schirtz recently came on board as the museum's graphic designer and media coordinator. He will design and install exhibitions with the museum's exhibition team and serve as the museum's chief photographer.

Tom has over 28 years of experience working in print, galleries, and museums. He has worked at major institutions across the United States as a designer, preparator, and photographer, including the Skirball Cultural Center (Los Angeles), the Autry Museum of the American West (Los Angeles), the Gemini G.E.L artist studio, and the Santa Monica Museum of Art. He received his BA in printmaking from the University of South Florida and is an avid hiker, artist, and photographer in his free time.

Last Chance to Sign Up for Museum Summer Camps!

CAMPS	AGES	DATES	TIME	COST	REGISTRATION DEADLINE
JURASSIC KIDS	2 & 3 years PLUS CAREGIVER	June 5-7	9-11am	\$35	May 29
DINO EXPLORERS	4 & 5 years	June 12-14	9-11am	\$45	June 5
ARTS MASTERS CAMP	4-6 years	July 19-22	9am-1pm	\$60	June 12
FOSSIL CAMP	Rising 4th-6th grade	July 25-29	9am-noon	\$110	June 18

See tiny.utk.edu/mcclungsummercamps18 for more information.



Join Our Director's Circle

Your gift of \$1,000 or more qualifies you for membership in the Director's Circle.

Director's Circle members receive exclusive access to the museum staff as well as:

- The opportunity to attend behind-the-scenes tours;
- Discounted event rentals; and
- A complimentary gift membership for a loved one at another address.

Learn more at tiny.utk.edu/mcclungmembership or call 865-974-2143.

People and Events



A. *Pick Your Poison* Exhibition Opening. The March reception drew a large crowd.

B. Knoxville Area Museum Educators Roundtable Open House. Assistant Educator Callie Bennett presents the museum's offerings to local K-12 teachers.



C. Valentine's Day Stroller Tour. Little ones and their caregivers work on Valentine's Day cards together.

D. Faculty Appreciation Breakfast. UT faculty and staff enjoyed heart-shaped doughnuts and special store discounts on Valentine's Day.



E. Planned Giving Event. The museum partnered with the Office of Gift Planning and UT Libraries to present a special event focused on estate planning featuring UT alum and museum supporter, Lark Mason, pictured at the right.

Lindsey Gharavi Steps Down from Academic Programs



Lindsey Gharavi, who initiated the museum's Academic Programs in 2014, left her role at the museum at the end of February 2018.

Under her leadership, the museum has welcomed thousands of students from over 40 departments for coursework, research, and class visits using the museum's galleries and collections. Gharavi organized dozens of creative collaborations and programming across campus, including a recent initiative to have nursing students hone observational and research skills in the museum.

She stepped down due to health issues and to spend more time with her family and finish her PhD at the University of Kansas. We thank her for all her work and wish her well.

**McClung Museum of
Natural History & Culture**

1327 Circle Park Drive
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mcclungmuseum.utk.edu

Event Calendar

May

- 5/5: Princess Diana: An Intimate Portrait Fundraiser
- 5/14: Stroller Tour: May Flowers
- 5/19: Family Fun Day: Let's Plant It!
- 5/28: **MUSEUM CLOSED**

June

- 6/5-6/7: Jurassic Kids Summer Camp
- 6/11: Stroller Tour: Show Me Your Mussels
- 6/12-6/14: Dino Explorers Summer Camp
- 6/16: Family Fun Day: Egyptian Deities
- 6/19-6/22: Art Masters Summer Camp
- 6/25-6/29: Fossil Summer Camp

July

- 7/4: **MUSEUM CLOSED**
- 7/16: Stroller Tour: Puppy Pals
- 7/21: Family Fun Day: Art in the Galleries

Upcoming Museum Closures

A reminder that the museum will be closed on Memorial Day, May 28, and July 4.

Summer Museum Store Sale

Enjoy \$5 off \$35
in the Museum Store

VALID THROUGH JULY 31, 2018

