



canadian museum of nature

nature

musée canadien de la nature

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

The Canadian Museum of Nature resides on the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinābe Algonquin people who have stewarded this Land for thousands of years. We acknowledge that the Museum's scientific research occurs in, and that the national natural-history collection originates from, the territories of the First Nations and Métis people and in Inuit Nunangat. We pay respect to Knowledge Keepers, both young and old, as we continue the important journey of Reconciliation.

The Canadian Museum of Nature is committed to increasing public interest, knowledge, respect, and appreciation for our natural world. The transformational environmental changes occurring today across our planet have made this mandate more critical than ever before.

We are proud to present the Museum's new strategic plan for 2025-2030.

Forged through consultation with visitors, staff, partners, donors, volunteers, community, and other important stakeholders, our new strategic plan charts a course for the Museum that will amplify our impact and reach the widest community possible.

This plan builds upon the strong foundation of Canada's natural-history collection and the Museum's scientific research excellence. It enhances the Museum's trusted position as knowledge leaders in Canadian biodiversity and geodiversity, while paying respect to Knowledge Keepers as we continue the important journey of Reconciliation.

The result is an inclusive set of interconnected pillars that will help us inspire hearts and minds to action.



Karen Dodds, Ph.D.
Chair



Danika Goosney, Ph.D.
President and CEO



A close-up photograph of a fossilized dinosaur bone, likely a femur, protruding from a dark, cracked, and textured soil surface. The bone is light-colored, possibly white or light tan, with some darker spots and a rough, weathered texture. It is oriented diagonally across the frame, from the lower left towards the upper right. The soil is dark brown to black, with a prominent pattern of irregular, polygonal cracks, characteristic of badlands soil. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of both the bone and the soil.

For over 150 years, the Canadian Museum of Nature has been dedicated to researching and preserving the natural wonders of Canada and beyond, offering a captivating glimpse into the rich biodiversity and history of our landscapes. This trusted knowledge and record is a vital asset to the world, and to nature itself. But that asset is only as valuable as its reach — if we want to create real change.

Unidentified dinosaur fossil peering out of the Badlands near Hilda, Alberta.
Photo: Pierre Poirier © Canadian Museum of Nature.

Our new strategic plan will help the Museum forge even stronger connections across our diverse audiences and communities for the benefit of future generations. Underpinned by the foundational frameworks of the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#), the [Convention on Biological Diversity](#), and [Moved to Action: Activating United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canadian Museums](#), this plan enables the Museum to amplify its impact.

With new knowledge, new sources of inspiration, and new ways of evolving, the 2025-2030 strategic plan charts a clear path for the future of Canada's natural-history museum.



Northern pike (*Esox lucius*) from Hay River, Northwest Territories, 1956 (CMNFI 2004-0046). Photo: Marie-Hélène Hubert © Canadian Museum of Nature

An artistic installation of the Earth at the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa, Ontario. Photo: Martin Lipman © Canadian Museum of Nature



Solid Foundations

Vision

To inspire all to be champions for our natural world.

Mission

To advance the understanding and appreciation of nature through evidence, knowledge, engagement, and a sense of wonder.

Museum paleontologist Marisa Gilbert examines a fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) mandible (CMNMA 57948) in the Museum's mammal collection.
Photo: Martin Lipman © Canadian Museum of Nature.



Solid Foundations

Guiding Principles

Stewardship:

We embrace our role as custodians of nature and of the resources under our care to ensure their sustainability, integrity, and utility for current and future generations.

Accessibility and Reach:

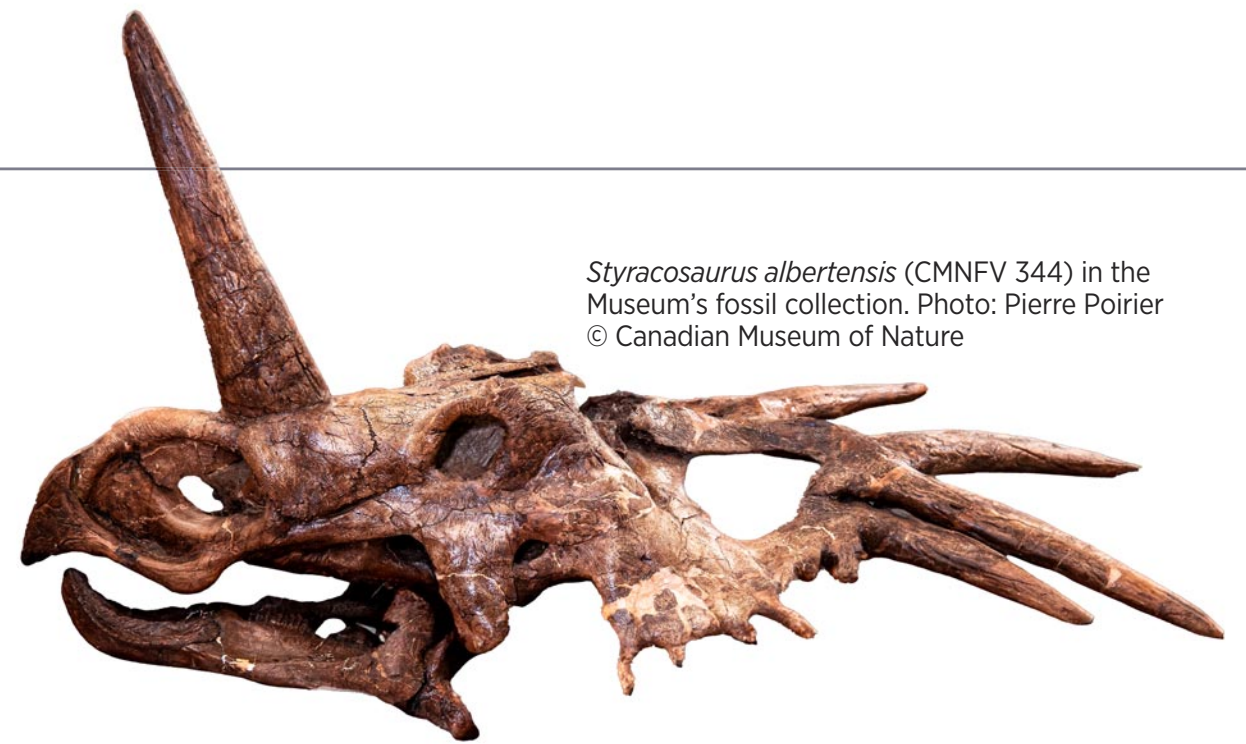
We strive for the Museum to be accessible for all and are committed to providing barrier-free experiences and opportunities to engage from coast to coast to coast.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

We seek diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences, and are dedicated to fostering an environment where all feel welcomed in all aspects of the Museum.

Environmental Care:

We recognize the responsibility we all share in protecting and preserving our natural world, and we strive to lead by example as a green organization.



Styracosaurus albertensis (CMNFV 344) in the Museum's fossil collection. Photo: Pierre Poirier © Canadian Museum of Nature

Our Commitment to Reconciliation

The Canadian Museum of Nature recognizes the historical wrongs in Canada's past and commits to a journey of learning and embracing a future that honours the presence, knowledge, rights, and well-being of Indigenous communities, and Reconciliation with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. We will continue to learn through collaboration and discussions with Indigenous communities.

PILLAR 1

Evidence & Knowledge

We will safeguard, develop, and widely share our **research and national collection** with Canadians from coast to coast to coast, expanding opportunities for ongoing learning, and solidifying the Museum's position as a leading authority on biodiversity and geodiversity.



Drawers of specimens in the Museum's invertebrate collection at the Natural Heritage Campus.
Photo: Martin Lipman © Canadian Museum of Nature

PILLAR 1

Evidence & Knowledge

Objectives

1.1 Share

Amplify nationwide access and recognition of the Museum's research and collections excellence, and the importance of our role in informing an understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity.

- *We will create new ways of sharing the results of our research with broader audiences, while also making the Museum's research and collections activities more visible across our exhibits and programs.*

A narrowleaf arnica (*Arnica angustifolia*) specimen collected on Victoria Island, in the Canadian Arctic, by Canadian Museum of Nature botanists (CAN 10085755).
Photo: Micheline Beaulieu-Bouchard © Canadian Museum of Nature



PILLAR 1

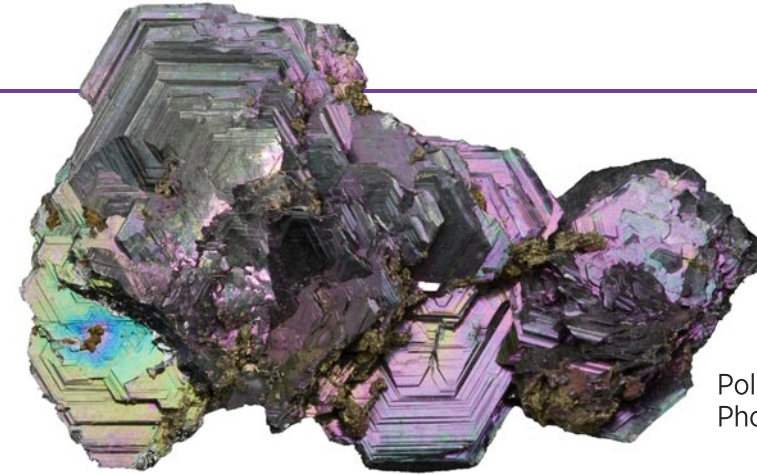
Evidence & Knowledge

Objectives

1.2 Build

Grow, preserve, and digitize the natural-history collection and sustain our collections-based research excellence.

- *We are committed to maintaining our scientific research. Addressing the need for storage capacity for a growing collection is a key priority, as is digitization, towards making collections data more widely available and accessible.*



Polybasite from Husky Mine, Elsa, Yukon (CMNMC 48444).
Photo: Michael Bainbridge © Michael Bainbridge

1.3 Foster

Foster the next generation of scientists and researchers in natural-history disciplines.

- *We are dedicated to offering student training opportunities that inspire the pursuit of careers in the natural sciences.*

Engagement & Wonder

We will amplify the Museum's reach, relevance and impact with a renewed focus on biodiversity and geodiversity that sets a clear approach to achieving the Museum's national mandate in a way that **instills a sense of awe**, encouraging curiosity, contemplation, exploration, and a deep appreciation for the natural world to the widest community possible.



A Museum science interpreter delivers a Virtual School Workshop.
Photo: Pierre Poirier © Canadian Museum of Nature

PILLAR 2

Engagement & Wonder

Objectives

2.1 Attract

Anchor the Museum as a cultural destination.

- *We will build upon the role of the Museum as a place for cultural and scientific gathering, and for community engagement.*

2.2 Advance

Advance environmental literacy and curiosity, exploration, and appreciation for the natural world.

- *We are committed to innovating visitor experience and creating relevant connections that captivate visitors like never before.*



A Northern Parula (*Setophaga americana*), donated to the Museum by Safewings Ottawa. Photo: Pierre Poirier © Canadian Museum of Nature

PILLAR 2

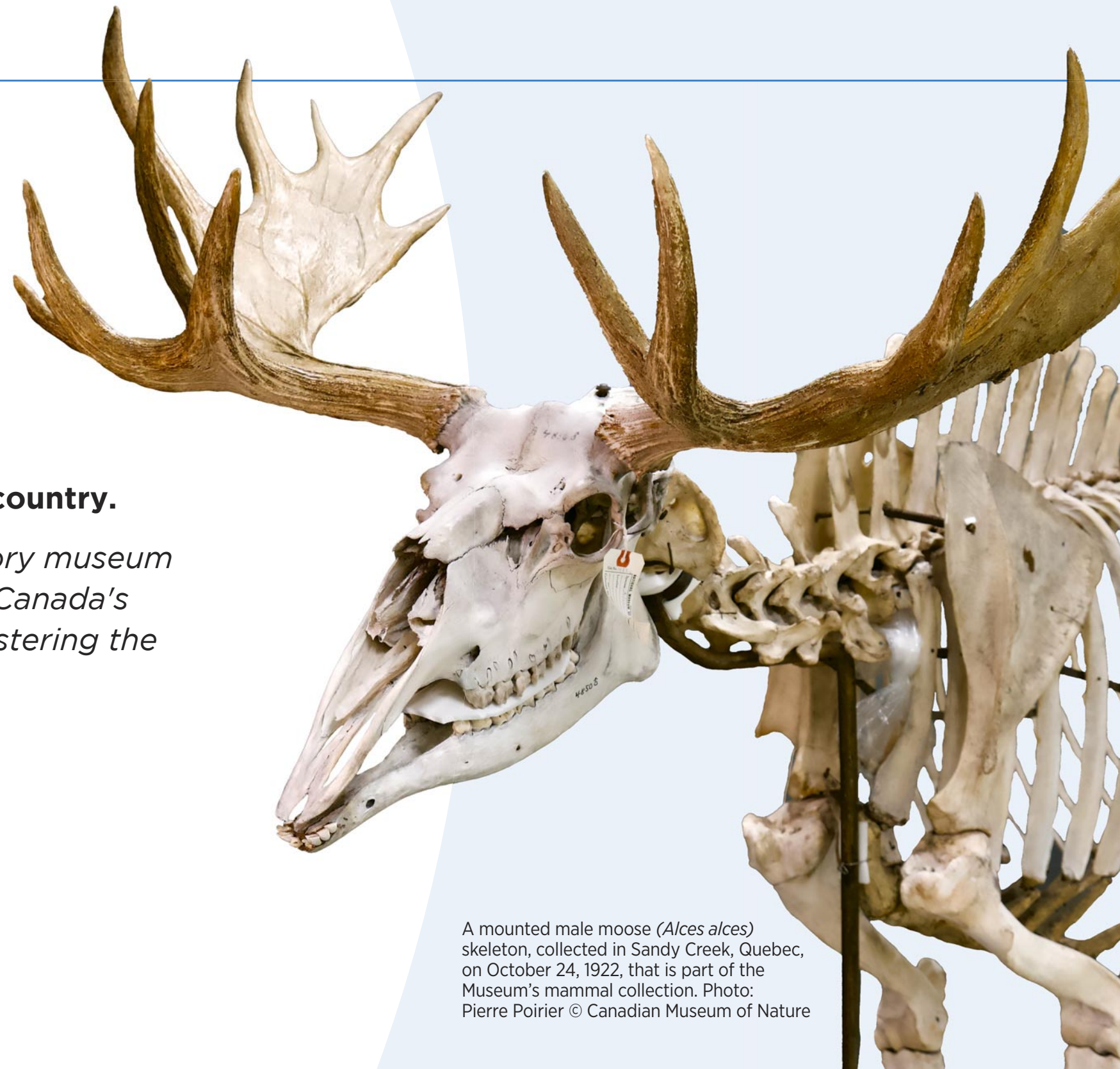
Engagement & Wonder

Objectives

2.3 Connect

Deepen connections with Canadians across the country.

- *We will connect Canadians to their natural-history museum through programs and exhibitions reflective of Canada's diverse communities and official languages, bolstering the stories we tell of the natural world.*




A mounted male moose (*Alces alces*) skeleton, collected in Sandy Creek, Quebec, on October 24, 1922, that is part of the Museum's mammal collection. Photo: Pierre Poirier © Canadian Museum of Nature

PILLAR 3

Organizational Excellence

We will strengthen the organization by fostering accessibility and inclusion, promoting a safe, healthy, collaborative and green work environment, and by supporting good governance and sound stewardship through robust data, training, processes, policies, and practices.



The Museum's Landscapes of Canada Garden and Victoria Memorial Museum Building (VMMB) in Ottawa, Ontario.
Photo: Martin Lipman © Canadian Museum of Nature

Objectives

3.1 Develop

Foster a healthy, caring, and inclusive work environment focused on support and development.

- *We will cultivate a shared understanding of organizational principles and competencies, augment onboarding processes and guidelines, and advance professional development opportunities.*

3.2 Lead

Be a leader in environmental care.

- *We will reduce waste, prevent pollution, and conserve resources within the Museum's operations. We will also engage employees to find innovative ways to reduce the Museum's environmental impact.*

3.3 Embrace

Instill a culture of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) by grounding IDEA principles and practices throughout the organization.

- *We will address key barriers to access at the Museum in consultation with communities, in alignment with the Museum's Accessibility Plan.*

Objectives

3.4 Sustain

Enable the sustainability of the organization through sound operations and good governance.

- *We will embrace digital technologies that drive efficiency and effectiveness, new approaches for fundraising and earned revenue streams that achieve organizational priorities, and clear processes that ensure strong governance, risk management and compliance.*

3.5 Learn

Continue to learn through collaboration with Indigenous communities on the work of Reconciliation.

- *We will bolster Indigenous representation across the organization and hire an Indigenous advisor(s) to guide the work on Reconciliation together with the Museum. We are also committed to providing training for staff and Museum leadership.*

Bubblegum coral (*Paragorgia arborea*), Grand Banks of Newfoundland (CMNI 2021-0036). Photo: Pierre Poirier
© Canadian Museum of Nature



Journey of Reconciliation

Over the course of the strategy's lifecycle, the Museum will engage with Indigenous Peoples to learn how we can advance in our journey of Reconciliation, including the exploration of the following questions:

Jason Tshakapesh admires an Arctic lyre crab (*Hyas coarctatus*) on the Uinipek^U Expedition. © SOI Foundation

The Uinipek^U Expedition, led by the Innu Nation of Labrador, brings together Innu Nation staff and community members, as well as scientists – including Canadian Museum of Nature researchers – to work together to better understand Labrador Innu lands and waters.



Journey of Reconciliation



John Lyall, Jr. with Canadian Museum of Nature collaborator Karen Filbee-Dexter. Photo: Pierre Poirier
© Canadian Museum of Nature

A boat guide and local Knowledge Keeper, Mr. Lyall is a vital part of the Museum's seaweed research in the area of Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.

- How might the Museum integrate Indigenous worldviews and knowledge with western science, as part of enriching the Museum's research and collections practices?
- How can the Museum, together with Indigenous storytellers, scholars, and Knowledge Keepers, share Indigenous stories, voices, perspectives, ways of knowing and ceremony throughout the Museum's offerings?
- How can the Museum honour the Land on which it resides throughout its platforms and experiences?
- How can the Museum recognize the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action? What supporting policies and guidelines should be developed as part of this journey?
- Which forms of training and learning will support this journey?



Beetle diversity of the Museum's Natural Heritage Campus (*Onthophagus orpheus*, *Endomychus biguttatus*, and *Popillia japonica*). © Canadian Museum of Nature

A View to the Future

The Canadian Museum of Nature is a cornerstone in Canada for natural-history discovery and learning. With a renewed focus on biodiversity and geodiversity on a national scale, the Museum is committed to sharing nature's story, and in turn, increasing environmental literacy.

Our future is an evolution to an even more dynamic and immersive institution; a living hub for discovery and learning. The future of the Museum is not just about seeing; it is about feeling, hearing, and experiencing nature.



Jennifer Doubt, Botany Curator, examines a liverwort specimen from the Museum's botany collection, the National Herbarium of Canada. Photo: Martin Lipman © Canadian Museum of Nature

A View to the Future

We will take a more active role in inspiring the conservation and protection of nature. Educational programs and exhibits focused on key issues of our time such as biodiversity loss and climate change will empower visitors to make a tangible difference in their own communities. We will feature a broader, more inclusive range of perspectives.

The reach of the Museum will extend far beyond its physical location; we will grow our vast digital archives to provide open access to research and collections, connecting scientists, students, and curious minds everywhere. Data from scientific research and new discoveries will shape the displays and narratives.

Visitors will be invited to return time and time again to see how the story of life on Earth is continually written and rewritten.



Gypsum (photographed under long-wave ultraviolet light) from Red River floodway, Winnipeg, Manitoba (CMNMC 84542).
Photo: Michael Bainbridge © Michael Bainbridge

Drawer with several clutches of killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*) in the Museum's bird collection. Photo: Martin Lipman
© Canadian Museum of Nature



**We will tell the
ongoing story of
the natural world,
for everyone.**



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A research camp on the tundra near Mamen Lake, Cape Bathurst, Northwest Territories.
Photo: Paul Sokoloff © Canadian Museum of Nature

Cover Photo: Site of a Museum research project on micromammals, shores of the
Narsajuaq River, Nunavik, Quebec. Photo: Pierre Poirier © Canadian Museum of Nature