The Pteranodon
Upcoming Programs, Events, and Activities
July 2018

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Sternberg Science Camps Adventures

Sternberg Science Camps 2018 are just around the corner! From the Museum nature trails and chalks of Kansas, to the desert of New Mexico and rainforest of Ecuador, we’re in for a summer of amazing adventures!

If you want to see regular updates and pictures from our camp adventures this summer, follow our summer camps:

- @SternbergCamps
- https://www.facebook.com/SternbergCamps/
- @sternbergcamps

Questions? Contact our Camps Director at DALevering@FHSU.edu or by phone at 785-639-5249.

3000 Sternberg Drive, Hays, Kansas 67601
Paleo Lab Notes:
STEM Teacher’s Workshop 2018

During the last week of June, the Sternberg Museum hosted Kansas middle school and high school science teachers for a STEM teacher workshop. This endeavor was part of one of the National Science Foundation grants to the Sternberg Museum to improve the quality of and access to the Museum’s paleontology collection data. The theme of the workshop was “Museum Data in the Classroom”. The paleontology department has been working hard for the past two years transcribing and improving fossil data, taking pictures of fossils, and putting these data into a database. This workshop gave us an opportunity to show science teachers how these data can be used in their classrooms.

Ten teachers from around the state worked together to develop classroom activities that incorporate data, images, and 3d scans of Sternberg Museum fossils.

Monday to Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
After trial runs in classrooms, followed by revisions, these activities will be available to other educators via the Sternberg Museum website and other K-12 educational websites.

Other highlights of the week include exhibit tours as an introduction to Kansas paleontology, behind-the-scenes collection tours, and a visit by the FHSU MakerVan (a mobile MakerSpace that can be fitted with 3D printers or other educational support materials that can drive to schools around the region). Workshop participants also enjoyed exploring trails, breweries, and restaurants in Hays! Search #FHSMteach2018 for more images and reactions and organizers.

Excavations Gift Shop

Excavations Gift Shop offers a variety of unique, educational, and entertaining merchandise for all ages. We are currently expanding our selection of books including subjects such as Kansas history, nature, science, field guides and hard to find titles for serious paleontologists. We also offer a wide variety of toys, gifts, souvenirs, and jewelry – all at reasonable prices. Check this column in your newsletter for specials and new items. Don’t forget, Sternberg Museum members receive 10% off of their purchase.
Ptara is going on break, but that doesn’t mean she is gone for the summer!

Check out her summer activities. She will be learning about famous fossils housed at the Sternberg Museum of Natural History!

Click [here](#) for the full series.
Sternberg Museum staff is saying goodbye to an artist who worked with us to create a special exhibition twelve years ago. Koko, the western lowland gorilla who learned sign language, died in her sleep on June 19 at the age of 46. Koko was born at the San Francisco Zoo in 1971. Dr. Francine “Penny” Patterson began teaching her sign language the following year, moving Koko and the research project to Stanford University in 1974. Patterson established The Gorilla Foundation in 1976 and acquired a second gorilla, Michael, as a companion for Koko. The foundation relocated to more secluded facilities in California’s Santa Cruz Mountains in 1979. Over the years, Koko has been featured in multiple documentaries and national magazines. With her ability to communicate, she served as a powerful ambassador between her endangered species and ours. So, how did this famous gorilla come to partner with Sternberg Museum?

Sternberg Museum planned to host a traveling exhibition about elephants in 2006. It was to include canvases splashed with color by brush-wielding elephants and that posed a philosophical question: do animals other than humans create art? This piqued our interest. Internet searches led us to the Gorilla Foundation website (koko.org) which featured prints of paintings by Koko and Michael. Unlike elephant works, these were titled by the animal (through signing) and suggested both representational and expressive intent. We contacted the foundation to see if we could arrange a companion exhibition of gorilla art.

We learned that Michael, the more artistic of the pair, had died in 2000. Koko lost interest in painting after his death, but the foundation had a set of framed prints. Their creative director, JohnPaul Slater, was excited about the prospect of an exhibition in Kansas. We asked him if Koko might be willing to paint something specifically for the exhibit and he said he’d ask.
Koko gave her response: “I want nuts,” which meant macadamia nuts, a favorite snack. She wasn’t going to work for free, but we felt this was a small price to pay to include a new original work in the show. We sent her nuts. Koko created two new works, an acrylic painting and a marker drawing.

As the foundation staff was explained the Sternberg project to Koko, she became fascinated with a scrapbook illustration of a wooly mammoth. This elephant, like the best people, had fur! Koko drew colorful fur with markers. When asked what she had drawn, she signed, “Elephant That!”

She titled the painting “Lip There Polite, Koko Love.” Koko’s caregivers had put out fruits and vegetables to attract banana slugs to entertain the gorillas. Two slugs, a large and a small, came to the feast. Koko, reflecting her own desire for a baby, interpreted them as mother and daughter. She felt the larger slug politely shared with the smaller. “Lip” was Koko’s sign for female (think lipstick).

The exhibition, which ran from June 24 to November 5, 2006, included Koko’s two original works, six giclée prints of Michael’s paintings, three giclées of Koko’s paintings, and a framed copy of National Geographic magazine from October 1978. Koko’s photographic self-portrait, take in a mirror, graced the cover. It also included a blank book for visitors to write messages to Koko. Many drew pictures for her as well. The book was returned to the Gorilla Foundation to share with Koko.

Koko’s death brings to a close a unique experiment in interspecies communications. We feel grateful to have taken part in the endeavor and to have extended the opportunity to our visitors. We will miss you, Koko.
Natural History for Preschoolers with Thea!

Seeds Can Fly!  So let’s fly some!

We will have some fun while we learn why some seeds fly & which ones can do it better.

Thursday, July 5 & Wednesday, July 18
10:00 - 11:00
$4 members  $5 general public

3000 Sternberg Drive, Hays, Kansas 67601
The Sternberg Museum of Natural History presents

**Murder Cretaceous on the Seaway**

A night of intrigue, drama, and murder!

21 and over

**Tickets: $20**

Babysitting available for extra $5

August 4

6pm - 10pm

Register at sternberg.fhsu.edu/murdermysteryregistration

Monday to Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
STEAM Storytime

Friday Mornings
Starting June 8th
9:30 am

Ages 3-6 with a 14+ guardian

Enjoy a science story and activity at the Sternberg!

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