



# 2021 Annual Report



July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

FOUNDED IN 1905

—

Connecting People  
with Nature and  
Science to Inspire  
Stewardship of  
the Natural World







# Directors' Message

Dear Friends of the Museum,

We are proud to share our 2021 Annual Report for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021.

Creativity, flexibility, and collaboration with our community have helped the Museum rise to meet the challenges of this year.

Keeping our entire team together was a priority. We are very proud of our staff, who found innovative tools to engage the public, support students, and execute indoor, outdoor, and remotely accessible programs to meet the moment.

As we commemorated our 115th anniversary in August of 2020, the community faced another historical event during an already tumultuous time. The wildfires that roared through our region were a dramatic reminder of how deeply connected our lives are to our natural surroundings. The Museum's mission to connect people with nature and science to inspire stewardship of the natural world took on a new urgency and relevance, reinvigorating our work and deepening our commitment to this mission.

This report reflects the final year executing a Strategic Plan that charted a path of growth and renewal. We are now prepared to embark on a new plan constructed on the strong foundations we've built centered on creativity, diversity, and collaboration.



J.M. Brown  
President, Board of Directors



Felicia B. Van Stolk  
Executive Director

# Science Education



3,185

K-12 students used  
virtual lesson plans  
based on Museum field  
trips and programs



69

Students attended  
*Nature Explorers* day  
camps in the winter,  
spring and summer





# Science Education



559

Students participated in live virtual programs with Museum educators based on Museum field trips



52

Live virtual Earth Stewards Programs focused on nature connection and conservation provided to alternative education high school classes



# Museum at Your Side

Visit ▾ Events ▾ Education ▾ Collections ▾ Get Involved ▾ About Us ▾ JOIN DONATE SHOP



*The Museum At Your Side Digital Resources* 🔍

The Museum At Your Side resource page is our new educational content, videos, and activities hub.

Online access provides students of all ages and abilities the tools and inspiration for connecting with nature at any time and wherever they are.

At the end of June 2021, this online collection offered:

- 49 videos of past Museum programs
- 31 blog posts including: On the Rocks series, the Rock Record, the Collections Close-Up, 9 guided activities for exploration
- and more!



# Naturalists Online



The Museum continues to connect with people and nature in new ways. Taking our programs and resources online has become an opportunity to zoom into new topics and bring naturalists into classrooms and homes, expanding our community of learning around the world.

Left: "Human Nature: In Relationship with California Rare Plants" with Barnali Ghosh and Amy Patten. Below: (right) A Cyclist's Guide to the Wildflowers of Santa Cruz, (middle) Macabre Mushrooms with Chris , (left) New Perspectives on the Past Through Freshly Exposed Rocks



# Exhibits

Developing new virtual exhibits has offered enriching extensions to the Museum's permanent and temporary exhibitions while inviting both viewers and visitors to keep learning.

These exhibits were visited 8,791 times.

Clockwise from upper left:

First Peoples of California, 2020 Vision,

Fossils of Santa Cruz County,

Garden Learning Center Guide





# Nature's Resilience On Display

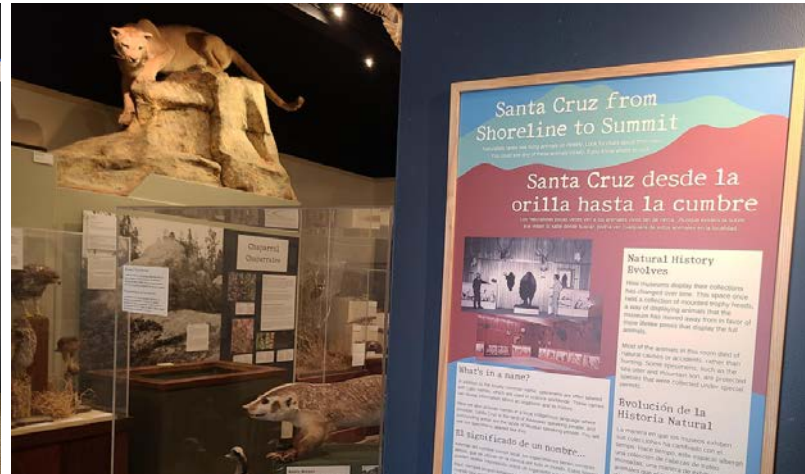


The annual Art of Nature exhibit opened on April 10, 2021, inside the Museum's galleries and online, allowing us to welcome visitors from all over.

Visitors were able to enjoy this cherished tradition while also experiencing our refreshed permanent galleries.

Left: *The Art of Nature*. Below left: Staff working on refresh during closure. Below right: Updated gallery interpretation.

Behind closed doors, staff worked on transforming gallery spaces and permanent exhibits with fresh paint, a new layout, and re-imagined interpretation.



# Re-emerging



Challenges throughout the past year have transformed many things, highlighting the importance of community and what can be accomplished when working together. In partnership we have helped one another find new ways to thrive.

Left: Pop-ups in the park featured 2020 Vision photographers (left) and Art of Nature artists (right). Below: 2020 Vision commemorative books were sold, raising \$600 for the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz's Fire Relief Fund.

2020 Vision was our first **community-created** exhibit in recent history. It inspired the first of several "Pop-ups in the Park" as we extended the Museum out into beautiful Tyrrell Park, where our visitors were able to safely connect.

# 2020 VISION



Reflecting on the Natural Events  
that Shaped an Unprecedented Year  
in Santa Cruz County



# Stronger together

Collaboration with other organizations has expanded our perspectives and opportunities to serve the community.

The Kenneth S. Norris Center for Natural History and the California Native Plant Society have joined the Museum in bringing community scientists together for the *CZU Lightning Complex & Community Science Project* to explore and understand local fire ecology.



Museums, arts organizations, and galleries throughout the county collaborated during the pandemic to support each other and coordinate a “welcome back” reopening campaign for local cultural institutions through “Museum Month.”



Lifelong learners connect with nature and each other all year-round through our engaging programs including the family-friendly *Out and About* series and *Member Meet-ups*.



# Collections



## Inventory & Enhancements

We inventoried over 1000 collections objects across our fossil, geology, and stone tool collections during the year. By adding four new shelving bays, over 400 pieces have now moved into an improved storage infrastructure.

Left: geology cabinet A-094. Below: fossil leaf collected by high school student in the 1970's, geology intern Clara Stanbury photographs quartz crystal as part of the Museum's collections digitization process

## Future Museum Professionals

This year's collection stewardship intern had a blended role. In addition to inventorying and photographing more than 450 specimens, they were able to focus more than ever before on synthesizing collections content for visitor engagement.





# Collections



## Taking the Close-Up Further

The Collections Close-up expanded from a monthly blog series to content highlighting the stories of our collections, a bi-monthly blog, and member events.

These explorations of our collections, collectors, and collaborating institutions can now be found on the Museum's website, accessible anywhere, any time.

Left: Collections Close-Up: Benitoite with Hilde Schwartz Below: Collections Close-Up: Making Sense of Made-for-Sale (left), Collections Close-Up: Herbarium Highlight(s) (middle), Collections Close-Up: Storytelling with Skulls (right)



# By the Numbers

11,613

*Followers on  
Social Media*

86,299

*Unique pageviews on  
the website*

11,263

*Views of 49  
online programs*

117

*NEW Museum  
Members joined*

1205

*Participants in  
outdoor  
programming*

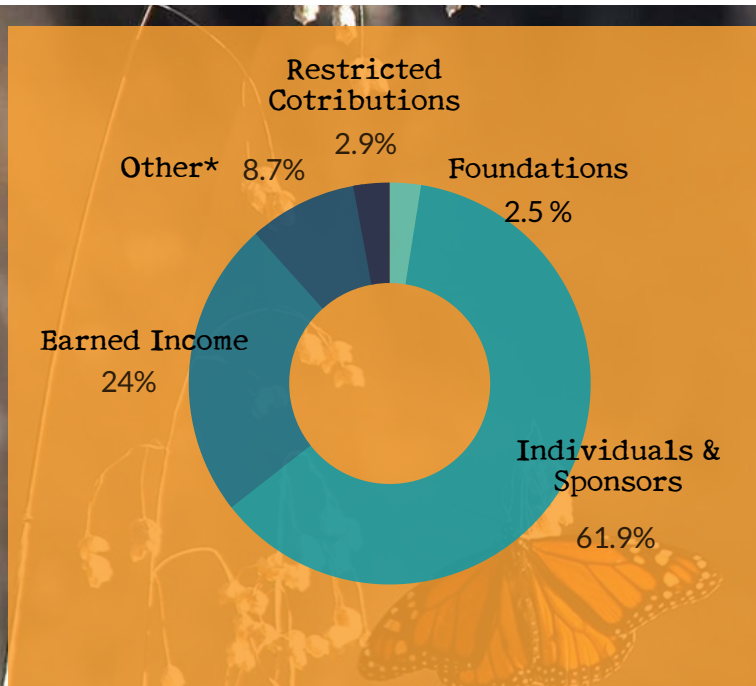
3022

*Visitors after  
re-opening  
April 10 -June 30*

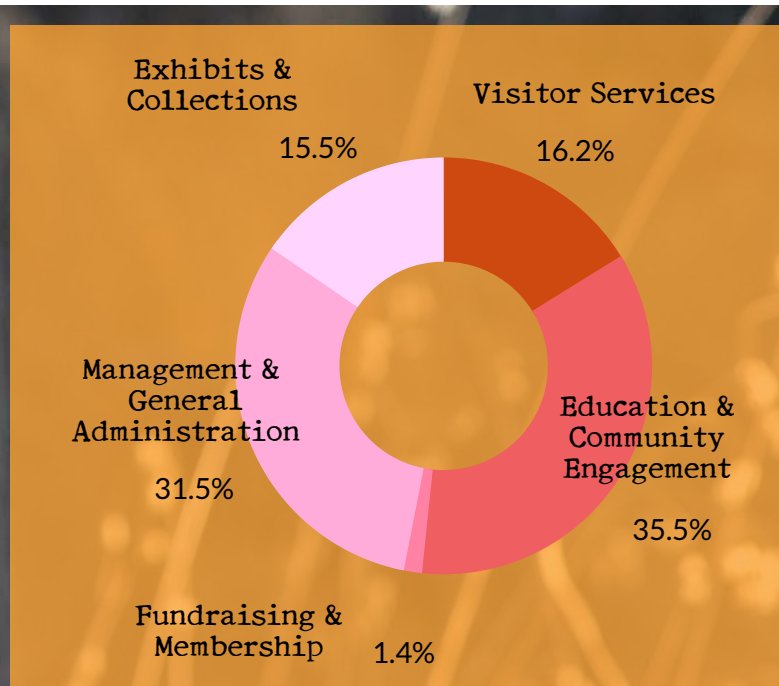


# Financial Health

## Revenue



## Expenses




- Operational expenses totaled \$725,585
- Earned income from retail sales increased by 36%
- Special Note: both revenue and expenses were lower than previous year due to the pandemic


\*Includes facility rentals and fees

# Board of Directors

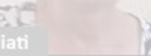
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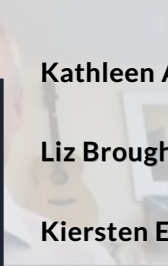
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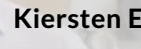
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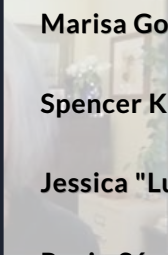
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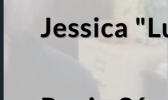
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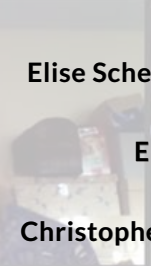
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\*No longer with the Museum at the time of printing. We are grateful for their contributions.

\*\*Joined at the start of the new fiscal year



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education and environmental  
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- Become a Member.
- Volunteer
- Talk to your friends about the Museum, invite them to join us!
- Donate
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