



The San Diego Natural History Museum



"I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in order."

John Burroughs



Dear Patron:

What image does the word 'environment' evoke for you? Does it bring to mind endangered species and threatened ecosystems? Global warming and melting polar ice caps? Recycling and doing your part to keep our planet healthy?



For many of us living in this modern-day world, we've become so accustomed to our daily routines that we find ourselves anesthetized by the very 'environment' that most often surrounds us: sounds of honking horns, construction crews jack-hammering or planes flying overhead; smells of exhaust fumes, dust and debris; desks and cubicles that leave us confined and isolated.



We here at the San Diego Natural History Museum seek not only to be "Your Nature Connection", but also *Your Nature Escape*. From propelling you back in time 75 million years via Fossil Mysteries, to plunging you into the middle of Antarctic ice with Shackleton's dramatic expedition, the museum is your gateway to adventure, education and respite from the demands of an everyday world.



Endeavoring to keep the cost of membership and registration affordable, we count on our Annual Fund to help underwrite these costs. Comprised of donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations, every contribution to our Annual Fund (no matter how nominal) aids us in our mission of stewardship and preservation.



Through our exhibits and educational outreach programs, visitors are free to relinquish synthetic constraints and instead enjoy a soothing retreat into the natural world. As you watch our award-winning film, "Ocean Oasis", you'll journey from the vast arid desert of Baja California deep into the pristine Sea of Cortes, where manta rays glide majestically with a grace that belies their enormous size.

And what better way to appreciate the knowledge you acquire from our museum than by participating in one of our much-loved Canyon Hikes. We've proudly offered these hikes for the past 30 years because of our strong precept that Nature is not just a pillar of study in academia, but a vibrant, living entity, intrinsically entwined with our very existence. These hikes serve as a bridge, transforming two-dimensional knowledge into three-dimensional life experiences. By listening to the sounds of a colony of cormorants squawking, or the gentle rustle of sycamores and willows swaying, participants enjoy both a renewal of spirit and rejuvenation of the soul.

The work we do -- preserving natural history through the collection of scientific specimens, pioneering research to further understand and safeguard it, and sharing this information through education and community outreach -- is all made possible because of your continued generosity and support. Your membership reflects your deep appreciation and respect for the vital role the museum plays as one of Nature's Guardians, and we do not take this responsibility lightly.

Our Annual Fund traditionally serves to help subsidize all the programs we've mentioned, and more, but it is only through the continued support of friends like you that we can accomplish this goal.

As the year draws to a close, we invite you to consider making a special contribution to help support our numerous programs and exhibits, so that we can continue not only to touch lives, but to help transform them.

We leave you with this quote from John Muir: "In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." If you find this sentiment resonates with you, an end-of-year contribution to the San Diego Natural History Museum is a wonderful way to show your appreciation for the wonders of Nature, as well as supporting our honored role in its preservation and history.



With Deep Appreciation,

Michael W. Hager, Ph.D.
Executive Director