

spark



Photo by Justin Miel

Happy Spring!

This is the time of year when buds start blooming. It's a great time of year to explore the outdoors and get reacquainted with nature after cozying up inside for a few months. Round up the family and plan your next great outdoor adventure!

Where's Your Science Spot?

WHAT'S A SCIENCE SPOT?

A science spot is simple. It's an everyday place where you can observe natural phenomena. Maybe it's the place where you see birds roosting each day. Or perhaps there's an interesting window in your house that creates wavy reflections. Check out some of our staff's favorite science spots - then share your own on our blog!

Some evenings at CuriOdyssey, when the sun sets in just the right way, you can see sunlight reflecting a soft orange glow from the building windows just across the Bay in Oakland.

- Joan, Director of Finance

The tidepools south of Pescadero. They're like tiny, underwater animal cities.

- Jeanne, Animal Keeper

In Leo J. Ryan Park in Foster City there's a boardwalk next to the lagoon with vertical posts and chains. On winter mornings when the sun is low, the condensation (or frost, if it's cold) will evaporate from the boardwalk except where the shadows of the posts fall. This creates a neat phenomenon of "wet shadows" or "frosty shadows".

- Eric, Director of Exhibits

When you drive by some of the large hotels on Airport Boulevard with polarized sunglasses on, the hotels' windows have interesting rainbows on them. They look completely different with polarized sunglasses on than without.

- Abi, Director of Marketing

My science spot is everywhere. I find magic in the air, quite literally. Sometimes it's sweet, sometimes it seems weightless and thin, other times it hangs heavily.

- Christy, Guest Services Associate

My science spot is actually an area - the Highway 280 corridor between Los Altos and Crystal Springs. Every day

I see wildlife - raptors on the fences near Alpine Road, deer grazing on the hillsides in Woodside, and flocks of waterfowl in Crystal Springs Reservoir. Often during the rainy season, I see rainbows and the rising sun on my way to work and the setting sun on my way home. It makes my commute very enjoyable.

- Carl, Director of Education

I love it when I walk by the bobcats at CuriOdyssey and I don't see them because they blend into their habitat so well. When I get up close to the fence they will be right there staring at me.

- Myra, Program Scheduler

We want to know about your "science spot." No observation is too small! Share anything you think might qualify and post it on our blog. **One person will be chosen at random to receive a gift for sharing his or her science spot.**

Visit: <http://www.curiodyssey.org/connect/blog/2012/02/wheres-your-science-spot>

CuriOdyssey in Pictures: A Call for Submissions

At CuriOdyssey, there's a photo opportunity around almost every corner. You can see otters splashing and birds stretching their wings. Other times your photo subject might be your own child, staring in wonder as they catch sun images on their out-stretched hands.

We see our visitors snapping shots all the time, and we have to wonder – **what types of images are you capturing?** We've decided that it's time to come out and ask. We want to see your best shots – on the humble camera phone or with an SLR – we want to see the world through your eyes.

Please share your photos on our Flickr or Facebook page. One lucky person will be chosen at random to receive a set of CuriOdyssey visitor passes.

Flickr Submission Instructions

- Upload your shot to your personal Flickr page (Don't have a Flickr page? Get one by going to www.Flickr.com.)
- Go to our Flickr page and join the group "CuriOdyssey in Pictures"
- Go back to your Flickr page, select your photo, and click "add it to a group" by choosing "CuriOdyssey in Pictures" in the drop-down menu.

Facebook Submission Instructions

Don't want to post it on Flickr? That's OK. Just post it on our Facebook page and write in the comments "CuriOdyssey in Pictures."



Photo by Graham Paterson

EARTH DAY
APRIL 22, 2012



Save the Date! Join us for our fifth annual Earth Day celebration. This year's Earth Day will be a celebration of citizen science.

What's citizen science? It's a term used for the collection of data by individual volunteers, many of whom may have no formal scientific training. It's an opportunity for all people to take part in scientific pursuits.

Learn how to become a citizen scientist, study animal behavior with ethograms, meet our roving Animal Ambassadors, and more! Help with a beach clean up and other restoration projects.

Come hungry! Have your lunch at the museum and purchase food from on-site food trucks.

Help us celebrate all the wonders of the natural world!

FIND US ON FACEBOOK & TWITTER

Get a behind-the-scenes look at animals, programs, and more!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CuriOdyssey

Twitter: @CuriOdyssey1



Photo by Graham Paterson

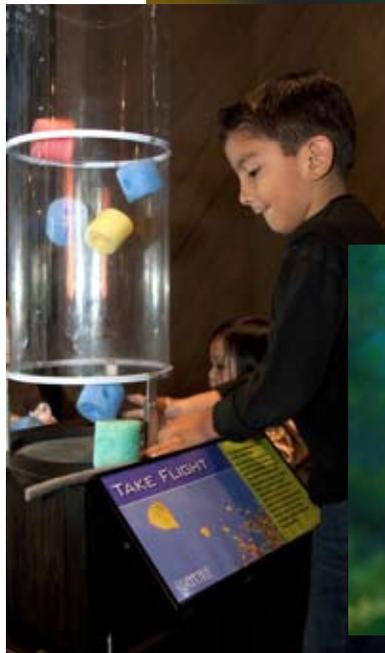


Photo by Graham Paterson



SEPARATING ROADRUNNER FACT FROM FICTION

When you think of a roadrunner, what comes to mind? Is it a large purple bird that plays tricks on an unsuspecting coyote? If that's the case, then you might just be surprised when you spy the roadrunners in our walk-through aviary.

Find out more about the fascinating roadrunner in our blog!

Visit: www.curiodyssey.org/connect/blog/2012/02/separating-roadrunner-fact-from-fiction



Above: Nikii-Finch Morales, Director of Wildlife, picking up the new roadrunners from the airport.

A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT OUR ANIMALS

Want to know how our animals arrive at CuriOdyssey? From arrival at the airport to release in our habitats, the process by which animals come to CuriOdyssey might surprise you!

Get a behind-the-scenes look on our blog at what goes into getting new animals.

Visit: <http://www.curiodyssey.org/connect/blog/2012/02/how-do-animals-come-to-live-at-curiodyssey>

New Feathered & Quilled Animals

This past winter, some animals found a new home at CuriOdyssey. Visit soon to meet a pair of Greater Roadrunners, two Hooded Mergansers, and a duo of Cattle Egrets in our walk-through aviary. A Peregrine Falcon, and a Hedgehog are the newest additions to our Animal Ambassador group. Learn about a few of them in this section.



Meet Our Hedgehog, Darwin

Our Hedgehog, Darwin, was a former pet who was surrendered to San Francisco Animal Care and Control. He came to live at CuriOdyssey in December 2011 and has joined our Animal Ambassador group. You can find Darwin roving the museum grounds in the hands of our volunteers, in school programs, and more.

Fun Fact: A hedgehog has about 5,000 quills.



Meet Our Peregrine Falcon, Horus

Our new Peregrine Falcon, Horus, was found as a young bird by a private citizen and taken to the Pasadena Animal Shelter. The bird lived at the Ojai Raptor Center where he was trained to fly and hunt by an experienced falconer. Shortly before he was slated for release, he flew into the window of his enclosure and scraped his eye. The scrape resulted in a corneal ulcer, and he was deemed non-releasable. Horus remained at the rehabilitation center and was used in educational programming until he came to live here in late December. Watch for Horus taking unscheduled walks through the grounds with our animal keepers.



Meet Our Roadrunners, Juniper + Sage

CuriOdyssey is now home to two Greater Roadrunners named Juniper and Sage. The pair arrived to us from the Phoenix Zoo in late December 2011. Juniper sustained an injury in the wild and is missing her right wing. She was transferred from a rehabilitation center to the Phoenix Zoo where she was able to breed. Her daughter, Sage, was born at the zoo in 2010.

Experiment with Science at Home!

ACTIVITY: WINDSOCK



In this activity, you'll be creating a windsock similar to the one in the picture above. While your windsock won't look exactly like this one, it will catch the wind in the same way!

You'll need:

- Lightweight plastic table covering 12" wide x 20" long
- 1 pipe cleaner
- Ribbon (optional for decoration)
- Masking tape
- String or yarn (3 pieces approx. 6"-8" long)
- 3"-4" diameter tube about 15-18" long (mailing tubes are perfect)
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Markers

What to do:

1. Cut the lightweight plastic material into a 12x20 inch piece
2. Cut 3 pieces yarn to 6-8 inches long
3. Take your piece of plastic and place it face down and flat on the table surface.
4. Place the pipe cleaner about one inch from the top end of your plastic.
5. Fold the top piece of plastic over so that it covers your pipe cleaner, and tape the edge down with masking tape.
6. Place the cardboard tube in the center of your plastic piece. Line up the top of the tube with the top of the windsock where you just taped the pipe cleaner.
7. Wrap one side of the windsock around the tube. Then wrap the

other side so that it overlaps the other. Tape the seam together along the length of the windsock.

8. Remove the windsock from the cardboard tube.
9. Using the hole punch, punch 3 holes at the mouth of the windsock (just inside of where the pipe cleaner is). Because of the thickness of the pipe cleaner, it may take some manipulation to get the whole punch over the pipe cleaner. The three holes should be equidistant from one another.
10. Tie the end of one string onto one hole, and repeat for the remainder of the holes.
11. Gather all three free ends of the strings together and tape them together or tie them into a knot.
12. If you want to make fringe on the end of your windsock, you may use scissors to cut tail fringes, or you may take light fabric or ribbon and tape it to the ends. Be careful not to add too much weight to the windsock or it won't work properly. Test the windsock outside if it's a windy day. If there's not much wind, test it out with a fan.

What's happening here?

A windsock is a textile tube designed to indicate wind direction and relative wind speed. Windsocks are typically seen at airports to help pilots and air traffic controllers observe wind direction and speed.

A windsock actually points in the opposite direction of the wind's direction. For example, if a windsock is pointing due north it indicates a southerly wind. Windspeed is indicated by the windsock's angle relative to the mounting pole. In low winds the windsock droops; in high winds it flies horizontally.

Questions to ask when observing your windsock outside:

1. Does wind blow everywhere?
2. Can you find an area (on a windy day) where the wind isn't blowing?
3. Why might there be no (or less) wind in some places on a windy day?

Questions to ask when observing your windsock with a fan:

1. What happens when you move your windsock further away from the fan, to one side of the fan, or directly in the center of the fan?



ACTIVITY: LOG LOOK

This activity is one that encourages observation and questioning. For this activity, you will need to locate a log to observe. If you can't find a log to observe, a large rock can also work. This activity works best when it is facilitated by an adult.

You'll need:

- Magnifying glasses (one per child)
- Time to explore the outdoors. Your backyard or a park can be good locations
- A log or large rock

What to do:

1. Observe the log. Encourage children to walk around the log to explore all sides.
2. Set up guidelines before rolling over the log. Explain that the animals are hiding under the log so when they are uncovered, they will be vulnerable to being stepped on.
3. Have the children line up on one side of the log and you can stand on the opposite side of the log. They will push and you will pull the log.
4. Tell them that on the count of three everyone will push the log over together.
5. Roll the log over to look for California Slender Salamanders, beetles, spiders, worms, and termites.

What's happening here?

The detritivores (organisms that obtain nutrients by consuming decomposing plants and animals) are eating the log and turning it into dirt. The salamanders are eating small insects and detritivores. The log is their niche. A niche is the sum of the habitat requirements that allow a species to persist and produce offspring.

Innovators Circle Contributors

The Board of Trustees and staff of CuriOdyssey wish to express our sincere appreciation to the following individuals and organizations for their generous support between July 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011.

Every effort has been made to be accurate. If your name is not present or you are not recognized properly, please contact Sarah Clautero Soto, Development Manager, at 650.340.7571.

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Tel: 650-342-7755

Events (March - May)

SAVE THE DATE

Earth Day

Sunday, April 22, 2012
Take part in citizen science, do animal ethnograms, meet roving Animal Ambassadors, and buy lunch from local food trucks.

SCIENCE EXPLORERS

Air, Water, and Light

March 23-April 27
9am-12pm
Your preschooler will cook with a solar oven, harness the energy of wind and get their hands wet exploring the properties of water.

Member fee: \$245
Non-member fee: \$295
Visit: [www.curiodyssey.org/
activities/classes-workshops/](http://www.curiodyssey.org/activities/classes-workshops/)

SCIENCE TOGETHER

Avian Adventures

March 20-April 24
9:30am-10:30am
Preschoolers and their caregivers will go on a bird-watching trip to the marsh, explore real feathers and eggs, and dissect owl pellets.

Growing Garden

May 1-May 29
9:30am-10:30am
Preschoolers and their caregivers will discover the wonderful world of plants by gardening, making leaf rubbings, and more.

Member fee: \$65
Non-member fee: \$80
Visit: [www.curiodyssey.org/
activities/classes-workshops/](http://www.curiodyssey.org/activities/classes-workshops/)

WEEKEND WORKSHOPS

CuriOdyssey Chemistry

March 17
10:30am-12pm
Explore acids and bases and surprising solutions.

Tool Time

April 14
10:30am-12pm
Reconstruct a creation of your own using your old appliances.

Earthquake Engineering

May 12
10:30am-2pm
Explore how and why the earth shakes.

Workshops are for ages 6-11
Pre-registration is required.
Member fee: \$20/workshop
Non-member fee: \$25/workshop

ON-GOING PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Animals In Action
Tues-Sat, 11:00am

Otter Feeding
Tues-Sun, 12:00 noon

Bobcat Feeding
Tues-Sun, 1:00pm

Animal Connections
Wildlife Show
Sat-Sun, 1:30pm and 2:30pm