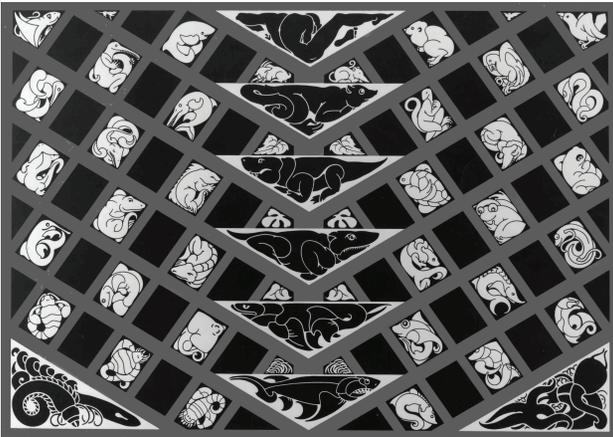


## Museum entrance

### Evolution in vinyl, 1937

The foyer floor shows stylized representatives of various groups of ancient and modern animals. In general, the groups are in the order in which they appear in the fossil record and broadly represent an evolutionary sequence. Nearest the door are invertebrates, then fish, the earliest known vertebrates, followed by amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. Many of these animals can be seen in the museum's fossil exhibits on the third floor.



Visit [biodiversity.ku.edu](http://biodiversity.ku.edu) for hours and to learn about the museum.

KU Biodiversity Institute and Natural History Museum  
Dyche Hall  
1345 Jayhawk Blvd.  
Lawrence, KS 66045

Call us at **785.864.4450**



## Museum building exterior

### Proto-Jayhawk?

The limestone walls of Dyche Hall are rich with carvings. Facing the museum, stand to the left at the bottom of the steps and look to Darwin's name under the arch. Directly above the inside right column is a carving of a bird. The letters KU are deeply carved into the stone just to the left. The cartoon-like features of the bird, with its big beak and round eyes have led some to suggest that this may be an early representation of the mythological Jayhawk.



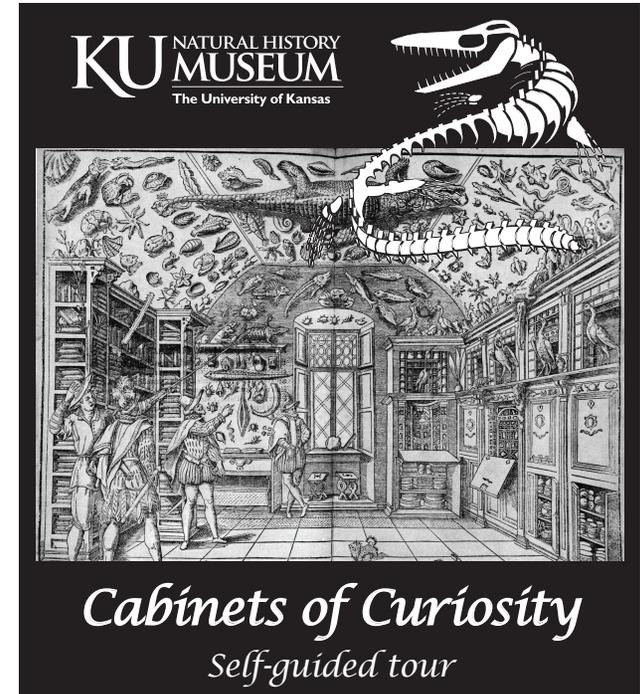
*currently in  
Panorama*

### Strange and unusual animals

There are many sculptures on the exterior of Dyche Hall that combine natural forms and monstrous figures. The most elaborate of these fictitious ornamental animals are the grotesques perched under the windows of the top floor above the arches. Some think that medieval architects and stone carvers crafted grotesques to ward off evil spirits. Others think they were inspired by the skeletal remains of dinosaurs and other fossils.



How many grotesques can you find? What combination of animals do you see?



### The possession of nature

The passage of nature into collections was brought about by the establishment of cabinets beginning in the 15th century for the study and display of specimens, objects and art. The term cabinet refers to the collections themselves and not the rooms or the cupboards where they were stored or displayed.

In 1864, as part of the university's charter, the Kansas legislature mandated that the university compile a "cabinet of natural history." Today our research collection is one of the most comprehensive in the nation and totals about 9 million specimens and 1.2 million archaeological artifacts.

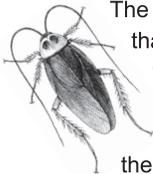
The odd, the strange and the unusual were prized objects for these early collectors. Use this guide to explore some of the "oddities" on display at the KU Natural History Museum.

## Third floor

### a Fossil Cockroach

Cockroaches are one of Earth's greatest survivors.

The oldest fossil of a cockroach-like insect is more than 300 million years old. It is not surprising when you consider that they can survive extremely high levels of radiation, live up to a month without their heads, and hold their breath under water for almost 40 minutes.



### b Fluorescent rocks and fossils

Some rocks and minerals glow when exposed to "black" or ultraviolet lights (UV). Fluorescence is the emission of light from an object that has been exposed to ultraviolet radiation (light). Other things that glow under UV light include scorpions, tonic water, body fluids and teeth.



Smile!

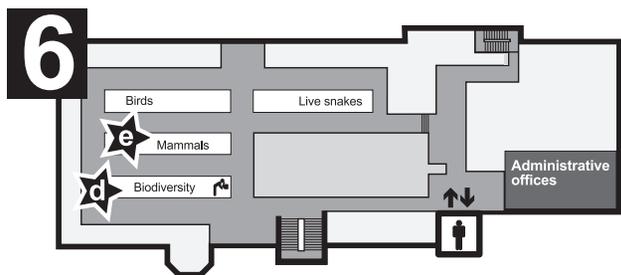
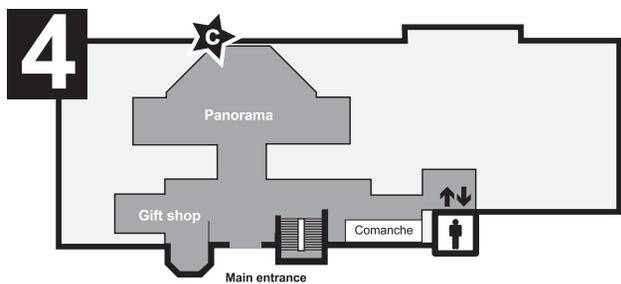
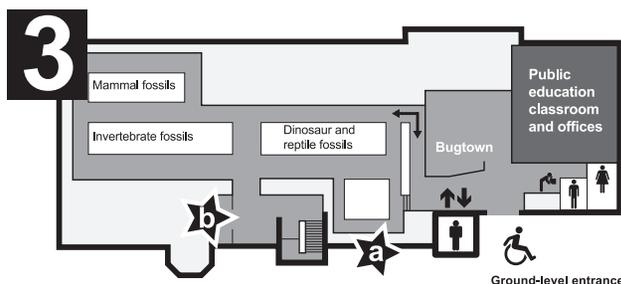
## Fourth floor

### c Display of wild beasts

The Natural History Museum was built to display the animal specimens collected by Lewis Lindsay Dyche. Dyche exhibited them at the World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago in 1893. The exhibit contained 112 realistically mounted North American large mammals and attracted worldwide attention. Although many of the animals seen here were at the Exhibition, they were not displayed in exactly the same arrangement. More elaborate foregrounds were completed between 1945 and 1960, and two of the habitats were added to the display much later. Can you guess which?

### Peek-a-boo Prairie Dog

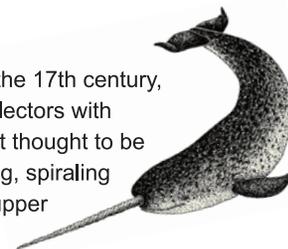
Look to the left of the pond in the Panorama and watch for the motorized prairie dog that pops out of the ground. Have you noticed it before?



## Sixth floor

### d Unicorn horn

From Medieval times through the 17th century, Vikings supplied European collectors with Narwhal tusks, which were first thought to be unicorns horns. They are a long, spiraling tooth that grows out from the upper jaw, usually in adult male Narwhals. These whales live in the frigid waters of the arctic.



### e Great horned rabbit



Have you heard the legend of the jackalope – part jackrabbit, part antelope? Some may dismiss the horned rabbit as a tall tale shared around a campfire by cowboys on the range,

but such stories often have elements of truth in natural phenomena. One of the rabbits on display shows the large horn-like warts produced from a viral infection; the other is the whimsical work of taxidermists. Can you see how one may have inspired the other?

Cabinets of curiosity and traveling fairs were filled with unusual and strange objects. These showcased unusual and poorly known plants and animals, minerals and fossilized remains, as well as manufactured oddities such as the half mammal, half fish *Feejee mermaid*. When English naturalists first received a specimen of a platypus from Australia, they were skeptical and suspected that it may be a hoax, similar to the 'mermaids' around at the time.

What combination of animals can you imagine they thought a platypus was made from?