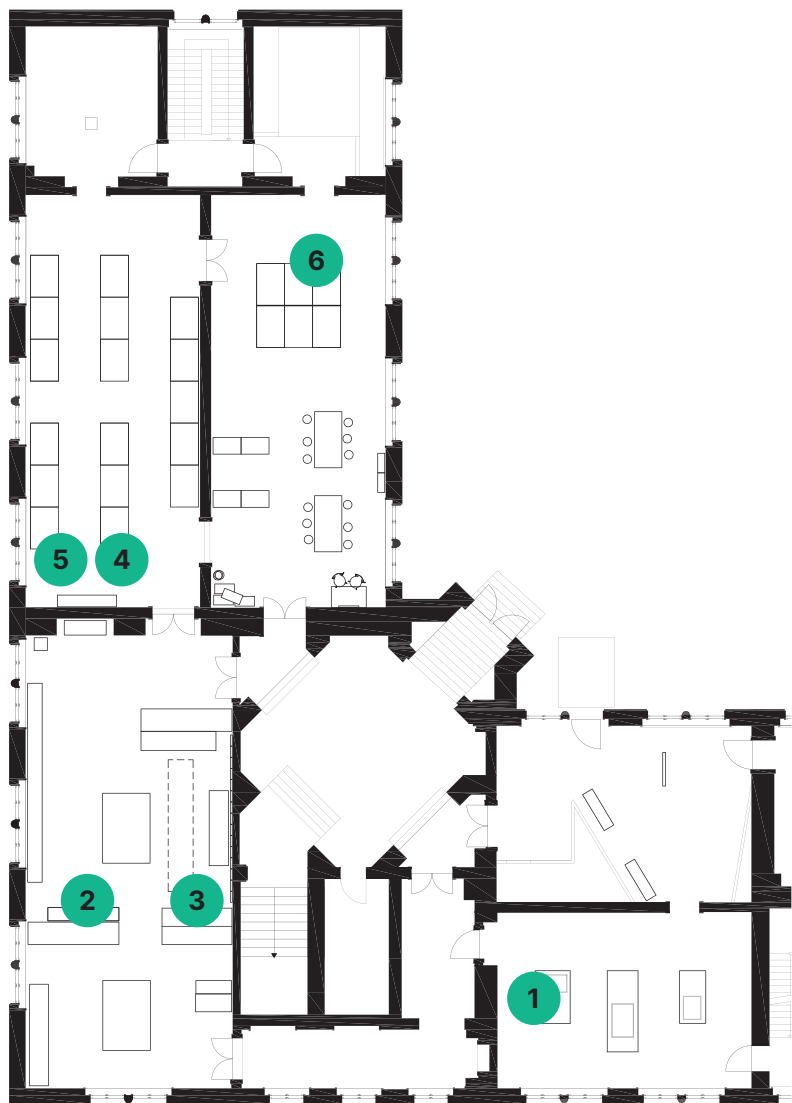


Discover the exhibition

Wild Wonderful World

Collectors of all kinds

Many people collect things. Some become experts and collect throughout their entire lives, while others stumble upon special treasures by chance. In the exhibition, you can meet a variety of individuals who have contributed to the museum's collections in diverse ways.



Exhibition floor plan

DENMARK
NATURAL HISTORY
MUSEUM

UNIVERSITY OF
COPENHAGEN

1 Johan Eugenius' herbarium sheets

Johan Eugenius was born in Greenland, lived in Nuuk, was trained as a teacher, and lived off fishing and hunting. He had a profound knowledge of Greenlandic nature, especially its plant life. In the early 1900s, he collected and preserved numerous species of Greenlandic plants, which are now found in museums worldwide. Johan Eugenius' family assisted him in his collections, and he taught them to collect and press plants. Several plants on his herbarium sheets were collected and described by his daughters, even from a young age.

2 Ole Mehls collection of beetles

Ole Mehl was a high school biology teacher and an enthusiastic beetle collector. He excelled in preserving and mounting beetles, and his collection, particularly of longhorn beetles, is exceptionally beautiful. Upon Ole Mehl's death in 2015, his impressive collection, built over more than 40 years, was donated to the Natural History Museum of Denmark.

3 Rosenberg and the mosses

Caroline Rosenberg, born in Denmark in 1810, unfortunately had no opportunity to receive an academic education as a woman of her time. Nevertheless, she became one of the era's experts and greatest collectors of algae and mosses. Living her entire life as a foster daughter of the family at Hofmansgave Manor on the island of Funen, Denmark, she studied Danish algae extensively, including seaweeds and red algae. Rosenberg also traveled and collected specimens and corresponded with experts abroad to exchange collected samples. She was highly respected, having a moss species named after her and being appointed an honorary member of the Botanical Society in 1866.

4 Children and tardigrades

When scientists need data or collections from large areas or particularly unique items, they can enlist the help of the public. Involving non-scientists in collection and recording is called Citizen Science. In 2023, thousands of school children participated in a mass experiment project, where they collected samples of moss and lichen from across Denmark. These samples also contained tiny tardigrades. The children's samples were sent to the museum and have already provided new insights into which species of tardigrades exist in Denmark.

5 War time and diatoms

Niels Foged was a botanist and an active person in the resistance movement during World War II. After the occupying forces unsuccessfully attempted to assassinate him, he lived in hiding on the island of Funen, Denmark. During this period, he had the opportunity to immerse himself in his field of expertise: diatoms. Niels Foged's network ensured that his research materials – slides with identified species of diatoms – were passed on from his hiding place. Despite being underground, this enabled him to embark on a research career. After the war, he worked as a high school teacher and eventually became one of the world's leading experts in diatoms.

6 Ole Worm – the first museum collection

Ole Worm was a physician, naturalist, and passionate collector in the first half of the 17th century. His collection was centered around medical science and how natural objects could cure diseases. Constantly expanding, Worm's collection became so esteemed and renowned that upon his death in 1654, King Frederik III acquired it and incorporated it into the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities. Many objects from Ole Worm's collection have survived to this day and can be seen in museums across Denmark, including Rosenborg Castle, the National Museum, and here at the Natural History Museum.