

*Jewish Heritage, the Natural World and the Land of Israel:
How YOU Make a Difference*



מוזיאון הטבע התנ"כי

THE BIBLICAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

IMPACT REPORT
2023

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As I walk through the museum, I continue to be amazed by everything we have accomplished together, and at our ability to adapt to meet current needs.

Each year, the museum grows. In 2023, we welcomed over 40,000 visitors – school groups, organizations and families, including non-Jews and Jews across the religious spectrum from Israel and around the world.

Since October 7th, guests have included many hundreds of Israelis who had to evacuate their homes, and families of reserve soldiers – for visits made possible by your generosity. Donor support will continue to make a difference through programs to boost national morale and provide emotional healing.

When we get feedback from visitors, one of the comments that makes us most proud is when they thank us for our sensitivity and caring. Always important, it is even more so now, as we host people who have gone through so much.

As we reflect on 2023, we want to thank you for your caring, generosity, and for being part of the museum family.

Rabbi Dr. Natan Slifkin

Director, The Biblical Museum of Natural History



EXECUTIVE TEAM:

Rabbi Dr. Natan Slifkin,
Executive Director

Maayan Steele,
Managing Director

Ellen Levi,
Head of Advancement

Dr. Sigalit Hertz,
Public Relations

Jonny Finkel,
Business Development



OUR MISSION

To inspire greater appreciation of the connections between Jewish identity, the natural world, and the Land of Israel



“What a place! I don’t think there’s anywhere else in the world where there is such a connection between God’s creations, the Bible and the animal world.”

Senator Joseph Lieberman

Enriching Jewish Identity

Through interactive tours, visitors explore the animals of our Jewish heritage and how Jewish identity relates to the natural world.

Appreciating the Wonders of Nature

Hands-on experiences bring the Torah’s texts to life and teach how to relate to the natural world with awe, respect and sensitivity.

Connecting to the Land of Israel

The museum experience strengthens the historic connection of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel via the role that its wildlife plays in Jewish tradition.



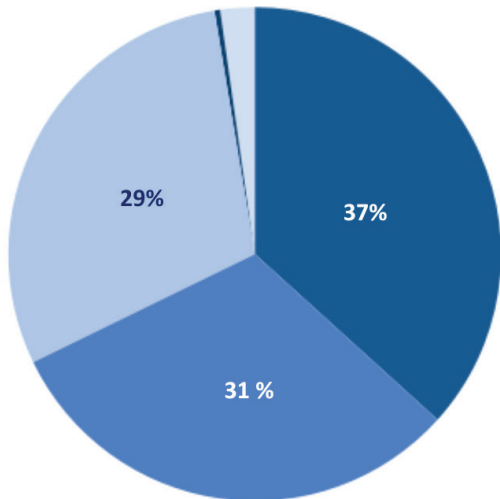
VISITOR HIGHLIGHTS

Diversity of Visitors

We continued to welcome an extraordinarily diverse range of visitors – schools, camps, senior centers and organizations across Israel, as well as programs for youth and adults visiting from around the world.

Jews across the religious spectrum, from secular Haifa schools to Satmar chassidic groups from Bnei Brak, non-Jews, children, teens and adults, and people with special needs all come to learn about the connections between Jewish tradition, the animal kingdom and the Land of Israel. They leave excited and enriched.

- Dati Leumi
- Secular
- Haredi
- Other
- Non-Jewish



A Chassidic yeshiva rebbe who visited the museum with his family thought that volunteering would be very beneficial for one of his students. Yisrael loved putting on his museum shirt and finding his niche!



Radio host Nachum Segal wrestles with Shayna, our giant python.



The Kashrut Department of Tnuva came for a special in-depth enrichment tour with a focus on our Hall of Kosher Classification.



In this group of Christian Bible teachers, participants came from Tonga, Indonesia, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Bolivia, Siberia, Zambia, Korea, Italy, Nigeria, Switzerland, and Benin!

CHASDEI TEVA FUND

Inspiring Groups of all Backgrounds, Abilities, Ages and Nationalities

In recent years, more school groups than ever have reached out to coordinate visits. Many of them, especially those from the ultra-Orthodox sector, are unable to pay anything close to the full admission fee. Chasdei Teva is the name of our initiative to subsidize these visits. Your support ensures we can welcome them all!



One of the hundreds of school groups that you enabled to learn about Torah and nature



Encountering a giant lizard is less scary when you have a puppet giant lizard!

Yakir Shlomo Honikman is six years old, lives in Tekoa and loves animals. He was born with cerebral palsy, and visited the museum with his school, Mercaz Shikum Yeladim in Jerusalem.

He talked about it so much that his father Yehudah brought him back.

“Yakir Shlomo loves animals and loves the variety of what’s available at the museum,” shares Yehudah. “He doesn’t just play with the snakes, but learns what our sources say about them. I love that he can experience and learn so much.”

“We are delighted to support this project, which has the triple effect of enabling groups who might not otherwise visit the museum to be introduced to the wonders of the natural world; introducing them to biological thinking; and, in some cases, simply giving them an enjoyable and memorable outing! The work of the museum in expanding the minds and vision of young (and old!) visitors is invaluable!”

*Michelle Stein and Paul Shaviv
Chasdei Teva Supporters*

EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHT

The Art of the Ark

Generous donor support made possible the beautiful new “Art of the Ark” exhibit in memory of Anne Samson.

The exhibit showcases over 100 stunning artistic representations of Noah’s ark, with examples from every continent, illustrating the different animals central to each indigenous culture’s heritage.

“I’m so touched by the generosity of so many people. This unique exhibit is of extraordinary beauty. The exhibit spreads a message of care and is a perfect memorial for Anne, whose beauty and warmth made her so beloved.”

Lee Samson, Chairman of the Board

The “Art of the Ark” reinforces the museum’s message of the centrality of the animals of Israel to Jewish heritage and culture.



EVENT HIGHLIGHT

The Feast of Kosher Curiosities

Thank you to everyone from Israel and the Diaspora who joined us for a sold-out Feast of Kosher Curiosities. The 130 guests enjoyed exotic kosher delicacies alongside fascinating insights into the world of Torah and wildlife.

“The Feast was a one-of-a-kind experience. We enjoyed an exotic multi-course meal at the museum alongside Rabbi Slifkin’s fascinating insights on wildlife and kashrut. We were thrilled to participate with so many friends and family and support the museum’s important educational work.”

Seth Fischer, Raanana



WHEN CRISIS HIT, YOUR GENEROSITY OFFERED COMFORT

None of us anticipated the tragedy we would experience on October 7th and the way our lives would change. When we considered how to use the museum's unique resources to help, you answered the call.

Your generosity enabled us to provide free tours to hundreds of Israelis who had to evacuate their homes, and to families in which a parent was called up for reserve duty, often for months on end. Thanks to you, we invited families for "animal interaction hours" and donated the softest of stuffed animals from our gift shop – a special request from the community of Shlomit (which evacuated their homes near the Gaza border) to soothe their children at bedtime.



To the Biblical Museum of Natural History family, hello!

Family - because you give the feeling of a family; the behavior of the staff towards us was filled with warmth.

We are from Netivot. We hadn't left our home for the better part of a month. No school, no social gatherings. We decided to take a long weekend to clear our minds and refresh ourselves, and we went to the museum.

It's hard to express how much we enjoyed ourselves. Your offer of free admission made this possible, especially as we haven't been able to work since the war began.

You opened your doors and your hearts. It's amazing and unifying, and we just wanted to say thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

The Maimon Family

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

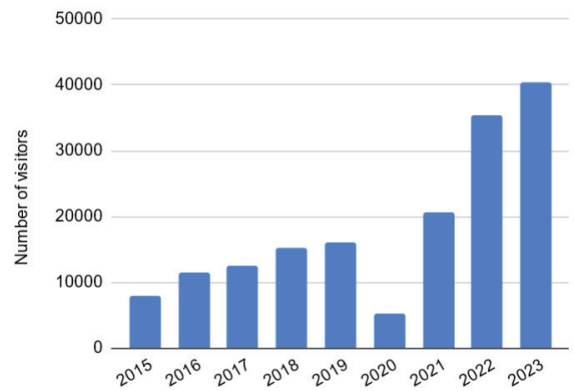
Continued Growth

Even with the steep drop in attendance after the outbreak of the war, over 40,000 guests visited the museum in 2023, including Israelis, tourists and groups of all backgrounds. We consistently receive 5-star ratings on TripAdvisor for an outstanding educational experience with our knowledgeable and friendly staff.

Financial Stability

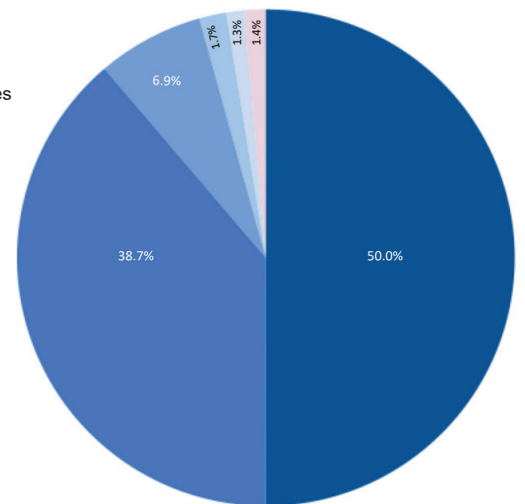
A continued increase in visitors and supporters put the museum in a sound financial position, enabling us to weather the difficulties created by the war. We were able to cover half of our \$1.1 million 2023 budget via ticket, gift and book sales, and events. Your support covered the other half, inspiring so many people with the beauty of Jewish heritage, the natural world and Israel!

Annual Visitor Growth



- Donations
- Ticket Sales
- Gift Store/ Book Sales
- Events
- Online Classes
- Other

Expense Coverage 2023



Some of the larger school groups, such as this group of 120 students, fill the auditorium to capacity!

ON THE HORIZON 2024

The Rand Mineral Collection

Jonathan and Anne Rand recently donated over 500 stunning minerals from their world-class collection. The minerals will be exhibited throughout the museum.

“We are thrilled to bring the best pieces from our worldwide mineral collection to Israel and enable thousands of museum visitors each year to appreciate their beauty,” shares Jonathan. “Showcasing these minerals in the museum will inspire people about the wonders of God’s creations.”

Special Exhibits Gallery

Our new Special Exhibits Gallery will house part of the Rand Mineral Collection as well as showcase unusual and fascinating rare items from around the world related to wildlife, nature and Judaism. The gallery will be open to Friends of the Museum, and to the general public for an additional fee.

The Torah Encyclopedia of the Animal Kingdom, Hebrew Edition

Our flagship publication has been published in Hebrew translation, thanks to the Ryzman, Baum, Distenfeld and Shepherd families. An initial 1,000 copies have already been printed, to be sold through the museum and in collaboration with the Nature & Parks Authority.

Thanks to generous sponsorship from Dr. Chaim and Chana Gelbfish, thousands more copies will be printed for sale and to be distributed to schools across Israel.

Additional Books on the Horizon

Several additional books are in the works, including a reprint of *Perek Shira: Nature’s Song*, sponsored by Dr. Elliot Goldofsky; a coffee-table volume to accompany our new Art of the Ark exhibit; and a book of nature-related insights on the weekly Torah portion.

Future Planning

With the extraordinary growth of the museum, we are set to outgrow our building - and our parking - within a few years. Initial steps are being taken to explore future expansion.



THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT POSSIBLE

Thank you to our 2023 Friends and Patrons!



Dawn and Ian Aaron
Emanuel and Helen Adler
Jennifer Albert
Paul and Diana Appelbaum
Debra Applebaum
Refoel & Sharon Pearl Auman
Heather Babber
Aryeh and Tzivia Bak
Esther Bak
Bank of the West
Mort and Edie Barr
Michael and Susan Baum
Eli and Monique Benun
Moshe and Rachel Berg
Michael Berlin
Robby Berman
Bryan and Andrea Bier
David and Eynat Blonder
Faith Branvold
Elliott and Robin Broidy
Daniel Brothman
Mark Brunswick
Sheldon Chanales
Yona Chesner
Assaf Chollow
David Cohen
Hart and Debbie Cohen
Bennett & Yocheved Deutsch
Yoni and Shoshana Domnitz
Steven and Vivian Dorfman
Morris and Julie Dweck
John and Nancy Dwyer
Eric and Yvette Edidin
Avraham and Sara Erenthal
Daniel Feinberg
Shimmy Feintuch & Yaffa
Epstein
Donny Feldman
Jack Fenigstein
Jeremy Fine
Mollie K. Fisch
Seth and Nealy Fischer
Stanley and Jacque Fischer
Elliott Forgash
Steven Frankel
Gabi and Yudit Frei
Dov and Nancy Friedberg
Howard and Paula Friedman
Jerry and Jean Friedman
Robert Friedman
Abraham and Nancy Galbut
Lawrence & Judith Garshofsky
Jeffrey Gdanski
Jonathan Gdanski
Chaim and Chana Gelbfish
Jonathan and Natalie Gerber
Mike and Michelle Gerson
Bob Zeller and Nadine Gerson
Bob and Zivia Gill
Gregg and Naomi Gittler
Aryeh and Judy Goldberg

Barry Goldgrab
Mark Goldin
Elliot and Seryl Goldofsky
Norman and Karen Goldwasser
Craig Gordon
Orin and Liora Green
Cecile and Edwin Gromis
Harvey Grossbard
Josh Grossman
David and Judy Hager
Charles Hall and Paula Sinclair
Avraham Hampel
Michael Leyzer ben Binyamin
Shmuel and Ilana Harris
Robert and Debbie Hartman
Ron and Toby Hersh
Estie Hess
Marvin and Marlene Hier
Aton and Rachel Holzer
Michael and Sarah Horowitz
Jameel and Judy Hourani
Mark Hyman & Sheryl Neuman
David Ilan
Mitch and Joleen Julis
Elliot Kalker
Ben Kasirer
Lawrence Kasmir
Harold and Magda Katz
Hillel and Ruth Kellerman
Jonathan and Faye Kellerman
Ezra and Lauren Kest
Andrew Klafter
Harry Klaristenfeld
Joseph Kornwasser
Scott and Aviva Krieger
Jonathan Kukin
Shalom and Tina Lamm
Meyer Last
Daniel Levy
Simon Elhiani & Rita Lewkowicz
Lisa Liel
Bill and Joan Lopatin
Daniel Lopian
Shimmy and Pearl Lopian
Chuck Lowenstein
Simon and Rachel Mani
Ben Maraney
Glenn Marshak
Shmuel Medjuck
Aaron and Aliza Menche
Stephan Miller
Elisha and Mimi Milstein
Larry and Carol Mizel
Isaac Muller
David and Marnie Nagel
Gitta Nagel
Mois and Deena Navon
Alan Nissel
Leo and Susan Noe
Barry Novack & Annie Baum
Tim O'Hara

Shauel and Dalia Ozeri
Mitchell and Karen Parver
Steve Peretz
Jonathan Pittinsky
Steven and Gail Plotnick
Janice Prager
Dovi and Naomi Prero
Gayle Pritchett
Jonathan and Anne Rand
Judy Raykoff
Robert and Melanie Rechnitz
Laurence and Sara Richards
Aaron and Miriam Robin
Marc and Lynn Rohatiner
Anonymous
Simon and Susy Rubinstein
Larry and Shelly Russak
Tzvike and Betty Ryzman
Robert Salehrabi
Michael and Eva Salzhauer
Gary Samson
Jules Samson
Lee Samson
Michael and Maureen Samson
Joseph Samuels
Shalom Sananes
Sunny and Debbie Sassoon
Moshe and Helen Sassover
George Schaeffer
Arnold and Sheri Schlesinger
Robert Schuckit
Edward Schwab
Paul Shaviv and Michelle Stein
Jake and Loren Shepherd
Marc and Francine Sicklick
Jamie and Marilyn Sohachesky
Ben-Tzion and Tamara Spitz
Chayim and Karen Stern
Michael Stern
Aaron and Abby Stiefel
Richard and Rebecca Szental
UBS Business Solutions
Tom Voletz
Harold and Brenda Walt
Yosef Weiner
Howard and Tova Weiser
Deborah Weiss
Steven and Rivky Weiss
Aaron Wertenteil
Steven White
Mark and Susan Wiesen
Winnick Family Foundation
Nanette Wolf
Menachem and Elana Wolff
Brian Zakrocki
Rosalie Zalis
Peter Zandan & Alonet Zarum
Zandan
Gitta Zarum
Alan and Lisa Zuccari
Lionel and Lydia Zuckier

US Board:

Chairman: Lee Samson
R. Yitzchok Adlerstein
Dr. Chaim Gelbfish
Dr. Charles Hall
Daniel Samson
Dr. Steven J. Weiss

Israel Board:

Rabbi David Bar-Cohn
Dr. Gabi and Yudit Frei
Rabbi Scott Kahn
Rabbi Elie Mayer
Mendy Newman
Dinah Paritzky
Mordy Rapp

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Sponsor an Exhibit, Publication or Program

Dedicate a specific museum exhibit, publication or program that is meaningful to you and inspire thousands of visitors with an appreciation of Torah, nature and Israel.

Become a Patron

Join the Museum family of patrons and support one of the most beloved educational destinations in Israel; our patrons enable us to host tens of thousands of schoolchildren.

Leave a Legacy Gift

Include a gift to the museum in your will and make an enduring impact.

Join the Board

Help guide the museum's continued growth and innovation.

Offer your Expertise

We appreciate the guidance of many friends and supporters experienced in different areas who donate their time and expertise.

Email advancement@biblicalnaturalhistory.org to let us know how you would like to get involved.



Steve and Rivky Weiss, sponsors of the "Animals of Avot" exhibit



The Russak Family, sponsors of the Russak Hall of Shofars



Seth Fischer, Gold Patron



Jake and Loren Shepherd (and children), Bronze Patrons



“The Biblical Museum of Natural History is a terrific concept.... Rabbi Dr. Slifkin’s work in teaching about the Bible and the animal kingdom has been wonderfully educational and illuminating, and I salute him for it.”

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks



 מוזיאון הטבע התנ"כי

**The BIBLICAL MUSEUM
of NATURAL HISTORY**

HAR TUV • 073-213-1662

OFFICE@BIBLICALNATURALHISTORY.ORG

WWW.BIBLICALNATURALHISTORY.ORG