



Museums are fun learning places. It has been estimated that America at one time had over 35,000 museums.

"The pandemic has inflicted profound damage on US museums, the vast majority of which are 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organizations. Early in the pandemic, essentially all museums were closed to the public. 33 percent of directors felt their museums were at some risk of permanent closure without immediate support—a threatened loss of 12,000 museums and 124,000 jobs." <aam-us.org>

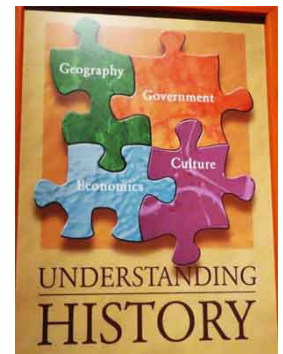
According to the American Alliance of Museums they have a profound educational, historical, cultural, economic, and social partnership with the communities they reside in. The size of museums varies. Some are national historic and cultural centers. Some have a focused purpose while others have multiple functions and cover a variety of scientific, natural, historical, or cultural topics.

This acuri.net photo program shares information learned at **The Bishop Museum of Science and Nature – South Florida Museum** in Bradenton, Florida. It is the largest natural and cultural history museum on Florida's Gulf Coast. It also includes a **Planetarium** and the **Parker Manatee Rehabilitation Center**. It is located near the Riverwalk at 201 10th Street, downtown Bradenton, Florida.

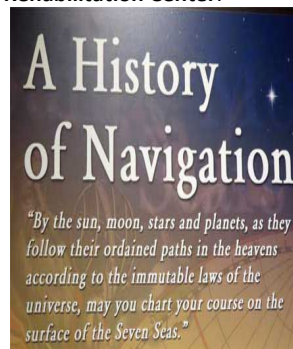
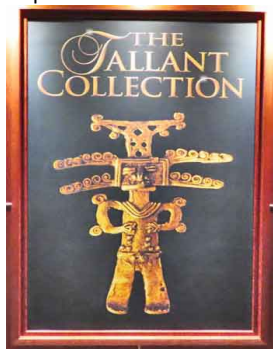


Some interesting facts about museums:

- "More people visited an art museum, science center, historic house or site, zoo, or aquarium in 2018 than attended a professional sporting event.
- Museums support 726,000 American jobs and contribute \$50 billion to the U.S. economy each year.
- Seventy-six percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural or heritage activities such as visiting museums. These travelers spend 60 percent more money on average than other leisure travelers.
- The economic activity of museums generates over \$12 billion in tax revenue, one-third of it going to state and local governments. Each job created by the museum sector results in \$16,495 in additional tax revenue.
- Museum websites serve a diverse online community, including millions of teachers, parents, and students (including those students who are home-schooled).
- Museum volunteers contribute a million hours of service every week.
- 97% of Americans believe that museums are educational assets for their communities.
- 89% believe that museums contribute important economic benefits to their community.
- 96% would think positively of their elected officials for taking legislative action to support museums.
- 96% want to maintain or increase federal funding for museums
- Museums receive approximately 55 million visits each year from students in school groups." <aam-us.org>



This museum has extensive displays and information sections on a variety of subjects related to Florida history. We encourage you to visit Bradenton and the South Florida Museum. South Florida Museum has many displays on the stars, universe, navigation, art, geography, war, culture, and society far too much to show graphically. Acuri.net will only highlight certain sections of this museum. The first part will be the history of the **first people in this land**. The second part will be the **Parker Manatee Rehabilitation Center**.

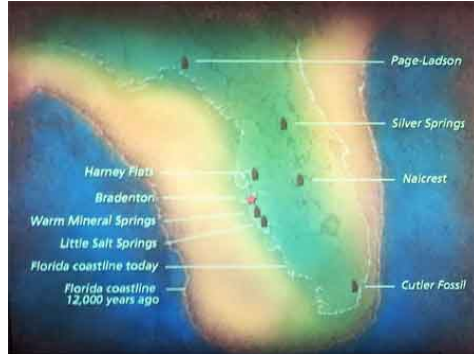
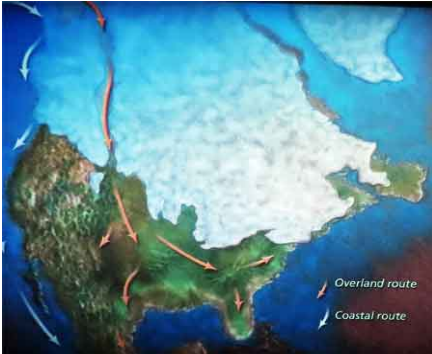


The Parker Planetarium at the time of our visit ran several different programs.



The First Peoples (Information from displays in museum)

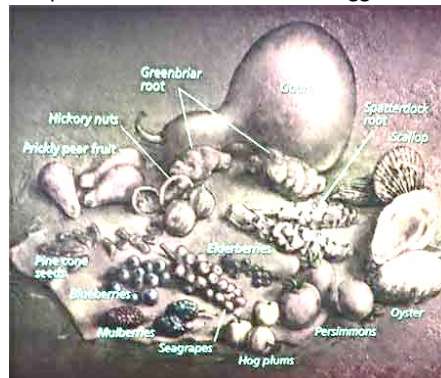
Paleoindians were Florida's first inhabitants, men and women who scavenged and hunted with great mobility. Descendants of people who crossed into North America from eastern Asia, more than 12,000 years ago. Oceans were much lower than today, and Asia and Alaska were connected by a bridge of dry land known as Beringia. As you can see below Florida's width was as much as 100 miles beyond today's shoreline. The climate lent itself to a diverse plant and animal environment with savannahs. Florida's springs and sinkholes provided fresh water. These waterholes provided a gathering place for animals and humans to hunt. Some animals did not survive the Pleistocene era, but white-tailed deer of today is very similar to the Pleistocene deer.



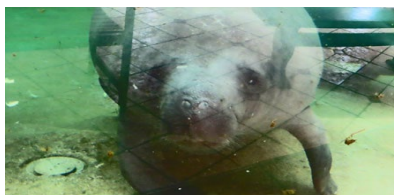
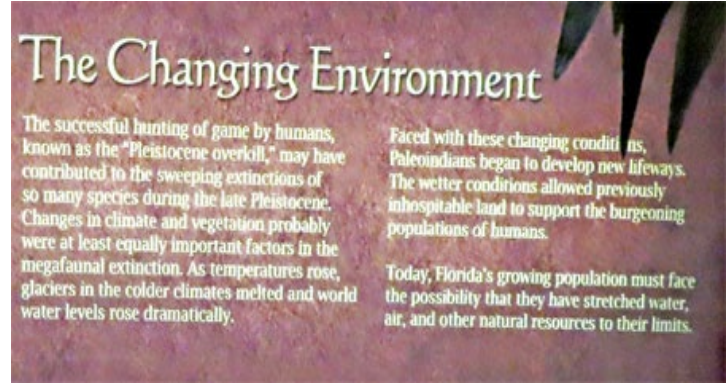
Bison antiquus was a powerful lumbering beast. It stood 7 feet at the shoulder and had thick horns that spanned 3 to 4 feet. The young were weak, but the adults were aggressive and required skill to hunt them. Men and boys used surprise, silence, and had to plan for the kill. A successful kill required family to butcher, skin, and dress the animal to preserve the meat. The kill meant not only food, but shelter and clothing. Bones, fat, blood, marrow, and sinews were also utilized. Camps were made by Indians close to the migrating animals. The nomadic people need tools that were portable and easily made to replace. Chert or flint were common spear points. Some tools were from atlatl, that allowed the spear to throw further. Scrapers, knives, and blades were other common elements of the lithic tool kit.



Florida's climate afforded a plentiful and diverse variety of edible food to supplement the first peoples' diets. The Buffalo was not the only animal hunted. Below are some of the plant foods they ate. As the Ice Age ended and glacial melt increased water levels, more hunters came to Florida. Adaptation took place with addition of fish and shellfish to their diets. A more sedentary lifestyle became more common. However, the peoples still had to deal with predators. As more people came, some predators were not the four-legged variety.



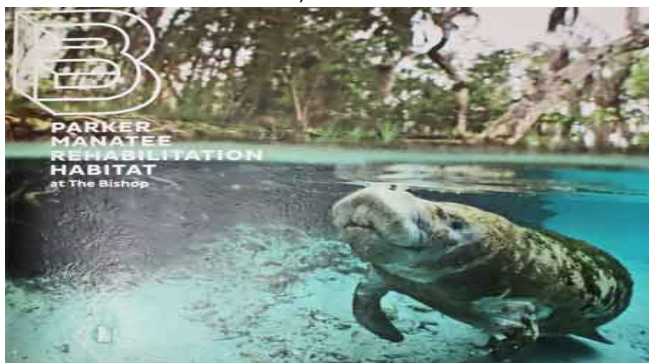
The first peoples also encountered the Paleo horse “Equus.” It was a single-toed genus of our modern horse. They also disappeared at the end of Pleistocene era. Bald Eagles were also present, very similar to today birds. Florida’s climate also enabled giant vegetarians to roam the grasslands. The mastodon below welcomes you as you enter the natural section of the museum. By the end of the Pleistocene era saw their demise also took place. River fossils also tell us that the manatee was also present during this period. Some tools were made from manatee bones. Without museums, historians and archeological findings through art and dioramas would not be shared with the public. We owe a lot to museums.



“Florida manatees are large, aquatic mammals that are native to Florida. Adult manatees are typically 9-10 feet long from snout to tail and weigh around 1,000 pounds; however, they may grow to over 13 feet long and weigh more than 3,500 pounds. Manatees have two fore limb flippers that they use for steering movements and to hold vegetation while eating. A large, round, flattened paddle-shaped tail is used for swimming.

Manatees have finely wrinkled, leathery looking thick skin that continuously flakes off. Algae often grows on the backs and tails of manatees, which makes their skin color appear green or brown. Barnacles (found mostly on coastal dwelling manatees) often leave round scars from attachment sites; movement from saltwater to freshwater habitats clears the animals of these saltwater hitchhikers. The manatee’s flaky skin adaptation also helps keep the algae and barnacles from building up on the animals. These unique aquatic creatures have some highly specialized features.

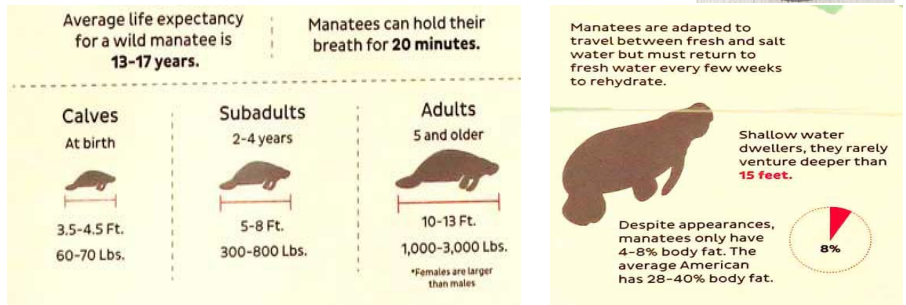
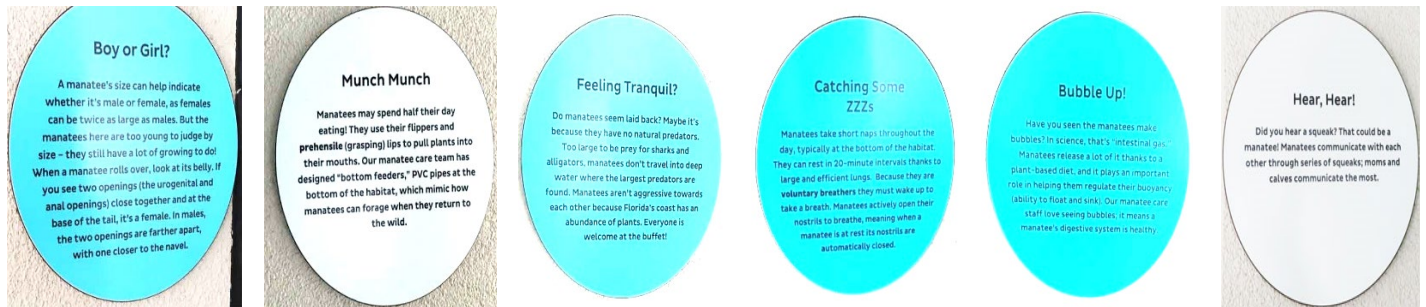
The West Indian manatee's range is from the southern United States throughout the Caribbean Islands, Central America, and to northern South America.” <myfwc.com>



The Bishop’s [Parker Manatee Rehabilitation Habitat](#) is a Stage 2 rehabilitation facility, modeled after a cypress spring in a new renovated area containing 60,000 gallons of water—a temporary home where manatees come after their initial critical care needs have been met in manatee hospitals. This second-stage facility offers manatees the opportunity to gain exposure to natural foods and feeding strategies, and gain weight for their return to the wild. Second stage facilities play a vital role in maintaining space for critically ill manatee patients in the hospitals. The Bishop has been rehabilitating manatees since 1998 and was a founding member of the Manatee Rescue and Rehabilitation Partnership (MRP) in 2001. The MRP is a cooperative of nonprofit, private, state, and federal entities that rescue, rehabilitate, and return manatees to the wild.



Watch the acuri.net “[Florida Manatees - Rehabilitation Center](#)” on YouTube, click [here](#) or above.



If you ever see these signs – care should be taken to protect manatees in the water



Sources: Displays at Museum, <https://bishopspace.org/>, <https://www.trailoffloridasindianheritage.org/bishop-museum/>, <https://bishopspace.org/manatee-habitat/meet-the-manatees/>, <https://bishopspace.org/manatee-habitat/>, <https://myfwc.com/education/wildlife/manatee/facts-and-information/>, <https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/mammals/Florida-manatee/natural-history.html>, <https://www.sarasotamagazine.com/activities/south-florida-museum-and-bishop-planetarium/>, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/manatees>, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LeFxl-2d3R8>, <https://research.ufl.edu/publications/explore/v07n2/manatees.html>, <https://www.frommers.com/destinations/sarasota/attractions/south-florida-museum-bishop-planetarium-parker-manatee-aquarium>, <https://www.thepalmbeaches.com/museums>, <https://www.livescience.com/27405-manatees.html>, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/14-fun-facts-about-manatees-180950308/>, <https://www.savethemanatee.org/manatees/facts/>, <https://coolcosmos.ipac.caltech.edu/ask/308-What-is-a-planetarium->, <https://www.yhc.edu/academics/math-science/rollins-planetarium/faq-general-information>, <https://www.srqmagazine.com/srq-daily/2021-03-31/16671-Parker-Manatee-Rehabilitation-Habitat-at-The-BISHOP-Ahead-of-Schedule-to-Reopen>, <https://www.scenesarasota.com/magazine/new-manatees-arrive-at-%EF%BB%BFthe-bishop-for-rehabilitation/>, <https://www.ims.gov/news/government-doubles-official-estimate-there-are-35000-active-museums-us>, and <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/about-museums/museum-facts-data/>.

acuri.net John R. Vincenti The Bishop Museum of Science and Nature: South Florida Museum