

# Brazosport Museum of Natural Science

## Self Guided Tour

1. Welcome to the Brazosport Museum of Natural Science.
2. During your tour of the museum, we ask that you walk carefully and talk quietly. Docents are available to answer your questions. Please remember, however, that we are all volunteers and may not know the answer to your question.
3. Let's begin our tour.
4. On your right is the Texas State Shell exhibit documenting Mildred Tate and Jim McIver's efforts to name the Lightning Whelk (*Busycon perversum*) as the state shell of Texas.
5. On your left this exhibit shows marine shells found on Texas beaches, in bays, coastal and offshore waters.
6. The two cases on your right contain the Mildred Tate Gulf of Mexico collection. Mrs. Tate was not only a museum founder, but also one of the first shell collectors in the area. More information can be found in the cases.
7. The next case on your right displays fresh water pearls - Texas Pearls
8. The last case on the right begins our systematic shell collection, in which the shells are grouped by the family in which each belongs.
9. Back to your left is an exhibit of shells and their egg cases. Many people are not aware that shells are animals called molluscs. These animals reproduce by laying eggs. The animal in the shell builds the shell for protection. As the animal grows it must enlarge its shell.
10. The last display on the left shows shells in both normal and albino forms.
11. The four windows on this back wall show large specimens of shells found in different geographical areas..
12. Past the second window on the left, you enter the Pecten Room.
13. In this room most of the exhibits have the shells grouped by the area in which they are found.
14. This exhibit illustrates facts about shells: color, growth changes and "freak" shells which do not grow normally.
15. On the back wall is the Pecten or scallop exhibit which gives the room its name.
16. The next exhibit contains land and fresh water snails - some of the most colorful molluscs.

17. In the Edible Mollusk window you will find molluscs eaten by man are shown in this exhibit.
18. Before returning to the systematic collection, take a moment to look at shells which have been carved or made into usable objects.
19. The cases on the left from front to back and returning to the front right to resume exhibit the museum's systematic collection of shells.
20. In the center of the aisle is a shell crafted object showing a sheller's study.
21. The cases on your left continue the systematic collection.
22. In the middle of this aisle are models of live molluscs created and displayed by Janey Cormier.
23. Returning to front right, you complete the museum's systematic collection.
24. In the low cases at the back of the museum, you will find a collection of echinoderms - starfish, sea urchins and sand dollars and other animals who share the marine environment with shells, as well as a collection of "sea beans," seeds which travel the seas and end up on our beaches.
25. Continuing on your right are record size shells collected on Texas shores. This study project is conducted by the Sea Shell Searchers of Brazoria County.
26. Straight ahead on both left and right are coral exhibits. On the left a diorama shows a coral reef environment. The last exhibit is coral which was given to our museum by the Houston Natural History Museum.
27. Walk past the revolving butterfly environment display and see beautiful moths and butterflies as well as some other large members of the insect world.
28. Along the back wall and the walls of the alcove are displays of birds and mammals found in Texas. A large window at the back of the wildlife area shows a hardwood forest scene. This scene would be typical of the forested areas of Brazoria County.
29. Look up and view the extensive collection of game birds.
30. On your left is the Hall of Archaeology. The Brazosport Archaeology Society does the exhibits and members of the society collected many of the artifacts. In the cases on either side of the door entering the alcove is a collection of points.
31. The first exhibit on the right shows artifacts from the Eagle Island Plantation located in the area which Brazoswood High School is now located.

32. The next case on the right is from a dig on the property where Dow Chemical is now located.
33. The window at the back is a collection of pre-Columbian artifacts
34. Coming back to the entrance, the case on your right contains artifacts from old Velasco, the Surfside jetties now cover this site.
35. Take a look at the Karankawa pottery. The Karankawas were a native tribe which lived in the area.
36. In front of you is Dinosaur Island containing a cast of *Allosaurus fragilis*. With him on the island are a Dromeosaur, Pteranodon, and a Triceratops, as well as a dinosaur eggs and a turtle and alligator from a more recent time.
37. The Beutel Hall of Mineralogy is on your left. These mineral specimens are grouped according to mineral content.
38. On the left are polished rocks and carvings
39. Inside the curtain, the effects of light on various minerals are explained.
40. A display of geodes shows both uncut and cut geodes showing the beauty found in these unimpressive rocks.
41. Jasper, compressed layers of volcanic dust, shows how nature can create pictures in rocks.
42. On your left are more mineral specimens and a case containing petrified wood..
43. Looking at the displays in the center of the Hall, you will find ivory carvings and a Chinese boat carved from jade.
44. Other cases show polished gemstones and mineral specimens.
45. The alcove on your left is the Children's Area an interactive area where children can get a hands on experience with nature
46. On the wall is a Megalodon shark jaw. Under the jaw is a case representing a fossil dig.
47. Opposite the Children's Area is a case with fossils, take time to read the information on these fossils and realize the relationships of the fossils to each others.
48. Facing the exit doors on your left is the Raymond Walley Hall of Fossils. Here you can learn about plants and animals which lived long ago. You can learn what is and is not a fossil.

Thank you for visiting the Brazosport Museum of Natural Science. We hope you have enjoyed your visit and have learned about the fascinating natural world in which we live. Please come visit us again.

Please don't forget to visit our gift shop for a memento of your visit.