



The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

SENSORY GUIDE

NHM.ORG



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Updated
May 7, 2025

Welcome to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. Guests may use this Sensory Guide to guide their sensory experience within the Museum. This guide includes the descriptions of light, sound and touchable elements in each exhibition space*. We recognize we may not have accounted for all sensitivities. Please speak with any Guest Relations Associate if your group needs additional assistance or would like to check out one of our sensory kits. The exhibitions in the Museum may change from time to time, please check the website before your visit to find out what is on display.

**This guide may not include temporary exhibits, please contact info@nhm.org for sensory information regarding special exhibitions not included in this guide.*

More Information

Everyone is welcome at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. We offer a variety of free programs and resources to make the Museum accessible and enjoyable for all guests.

Visit the [Plan Your Visit](#) page at NHM.ORG to learn more.

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Exhibition Space	Floor, Description	Sound 🗣️	Light 💡	Touch 🖐️
 <p>Grand Foyer</p>	<p>Level 1 This is the Museum's main entryway. See the Dueling Dinosaurs and keep your eye out for volunteers with touchable specimens. When busy, this space can be loud.</p>	HIGH	MODERATE	LOW
 <p>Dinosaur Hall</p>	<p>Level 1 Our most popular hall, with a lot to see! This space is well lit, often busy, and can get quite noisy. This hall has some opportunity for interaction in both touching fossil casts and touch screens.</p>	HIGH	HIGH	MODERATE
 <p>Age of Mammals</p>	<p>Level 1 This two-level exhibition has bright natural light with spaces to sit down throughout, and an elevator and stairs to provide access to the Mezzanine level. Look for interactive touch screens on both levels.</p>	MODERATE	MODERATE	LOW
 <p>Becoming Los Angeles</p>	<p>Level 1 This large exhibition tells the history of Los Angeles. Video screens as well as the open nature of the exhibition can cause echoing. Opportunities to sit down exist throughout the exhibition.</p>	MODERATE	MODERATE	LOW
 <p>North American/African Mammal Halls</p>	<p>Level 1/Level 2 These halls feature intricate diorama scenes with taxidermied animals. These low-light exhibitions are popular among school visitors and tend to echo. Look for volunteers with touchable specimens near entrances!</p>	MODERATE	LOW	LOW
 <p>Gem and Mineral Hall</p>	<p>Level 1 This very low-light exhibition is carpeted, which reduces noise some, but still gets noisy on busier days. There are a few opportunities to touch mineral specimens.</p>	MODERATE	LOW	LOW
 <p>Mineral Sciences & SEM Lab</p>	<p>Level 1 Get a behind-the-scenes look at both the Scanning Electron Microscope and the Mineral Sciences Lab to see research in action. This space is small, well lit by fluorescent lights and can be a drastic lighting transition to and from the Gem & Mineral Hall.</p>	LOW	HIGH	LOW

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 <p>Los Angeles Underwater: The Prehistoric Sea Beneath Us</p>	<p>Level 1 Dive in and discover prehistoric Los Angeles! In this immersive multimedia exhibit you can see animations that imagine what our prehistoric seas may have looked like millions of years ago. This exhibit features some touch opportunities with an interactive fossil map and fossil replicas. Light levels remain low to support the light projections of the experience.</p>	HIGH	LOW	MODERATE
 <p>Rotunda</p>	<p>Level 1 Visit our famous sculpture <i>Three Graces</i> in the Rotunda along with many other small exhibits featuring various items from our collections. This space features low light, high ceilings, and can get loud on busier days. Natural light tends to pour in from the doors to the East steps.</p>	MODERATE	MODERATE	LOW
 <p>Collective Knowledge from Our Changing World in the Theater Gallery</p>	<p>Level 1 Collective Knowledge from Our Changing World invites visitors to take a fresh look at NHM's collections through twelve large-scale photographs by collaborating artist, Craig Cutler. The exhibit also features a high-definition, panoramic media piece showcasing the dynamic nature of NHM's collection.</p>	MODERATE	MODERATE	LOW
 <p>Judith Perstein Welcome Center & NHM Commons</p>	<p>Level 1 Explore the Judith Perstein Welcome Center with new exhibits, displays and ticketing desks for visitors and Members. This ticketing area features large open windows that invites natural light into the space, interactive screens, and a pathway to and from the Theater gallery and Cafe.</p>	HIGH	HIGH	MODERATE

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 <p>Discovery Center</p>	<p>Level 2</p> <p>This space is very interactive! It includes an insect zoo, fossil dig pits, and many touchable elements. It is heavily visited and can get loud on some days. The hall is a bright, open space that has an elevator to the first floor.</p>	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
 <p>Bird Hall</p>	<p>Level 2</p> <p>Portions of the Hall of Birds are currently closed, but 400 taxidermed local bird species are still on display in this medium lit space. Visit our website for more up-to-date information.</p>	LOW	MODERATE	LOW
 <p>Visible Vault</p>	<p>Level 2</p> <p>This space is a wide hallway with Meso-American artifacts displayed in glass cases on either side. There are two touch-activated screens, which highlight objects. There is very low light in this section and hard surfaces can create an echo.</p>	LOW	LOW	LOW
 <p>Dino Lab</p>	<p>Level 2</p> <p>This space is a long, wide hallway with a glass window that allows guests to see fossil preparators at work cleaning fossils from the collection. This space is bright.</p>	MODERATE	MODERATE	LOW
 <p>Reframing Dioramas: The Art of Preserving Wilderness</p>	<p>Level 2</p> <p>Examine dioramas through a series of multimedia displays, illustrations and exhibit cases that shed light on the previously untold history of NHM's dioramas. This hall is rich in multimedia and a sound experience that may be overwhelming to some visitors. Be prepared for low light, dynamic lighting and various sound scapes.</p>	HIGH	LOW	LOW

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 <p>Nature Lab</p>	<p>Level G The Nature Lab is a large space with interactive elements. It has live animal displays. The space is very bright and can be noisier on busier days.</p>	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
 <p>The Story of P-22</p>	<p>Level G This temporary exhibition features the story of mountain lion P-22. It is a bright space with many interactive and touchable elements. There is a projection on the floor guests can step on.</p>	MODERATE	MODERATE	HIGH
 <p>Museum Cafe/SouthLA Cafe</p>	<p>Level G On busy days the Café will be bustling during the lunch hours (from around 11:30 – 2:00). Seek seating on the patio or in the indoor hallway outside the Café entrance for a quieter place to enjoy food. Food orders can also be taken to-go and eaten elsewhere.</p>	MODERATE	HIGH	LOW
 <p>Nature Gardens</p>	<p>Outside The Nature Gardens is a large outdoor space that surrounds the Museum. It has a water feature, pond, additional seating areas, areas of bright sun and shade. Guests are encouraged to touch and smell the plants but not to pick them. Guests will also see some wildlife living in the gardens.</p>	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH
 <p>Butterfly/Spider Pavilion</p>	<p>Outside The Pavilion is an enclosed outdoor space that features our seasonal Butterfly Pavilion (Spring-Fall) and Spider Pavilion (Fall). Guests can see the animals in their natural environment outside enclosures. It is not temperature controlled, there is timed ticketing to enter and can be busy during peak times. Guests are encouraged to look but not touch the live animals in this space.</p>	HIGH	HIGH	LOW
 <p>Community Plaza</p>	<p>Outside Enjoy a beautiful, sustainably landscaped outdoor space with features that honor Southern California Native communities for their past and ongoing stewardship of natural spaces. This space is paved, outdoors and may be impacted by noise and foot traffic on busier days.</p>	HIGH	HIGH	LOW

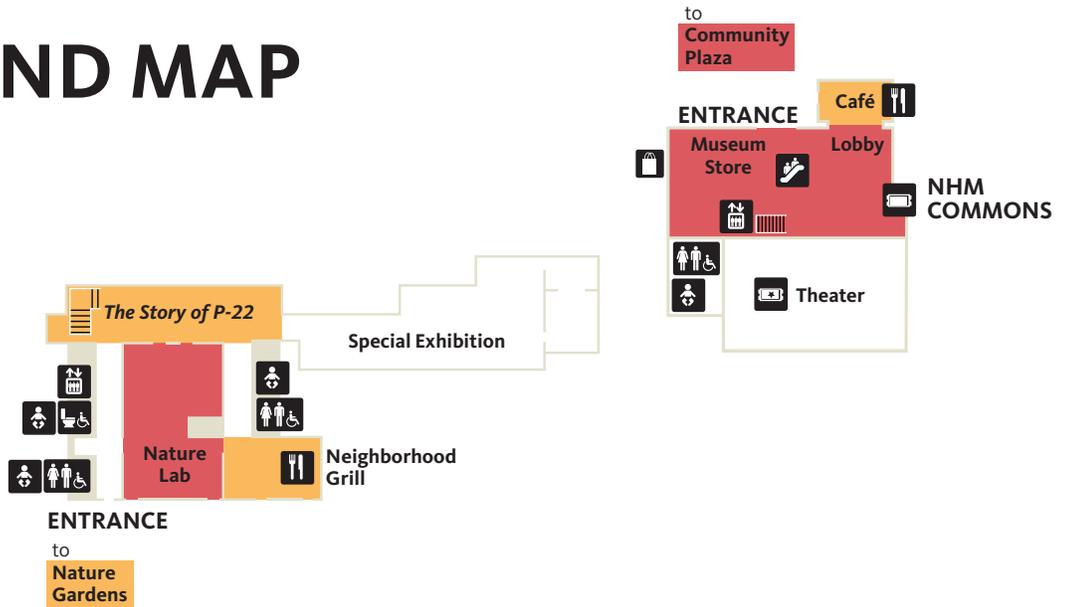


SOUND MAP

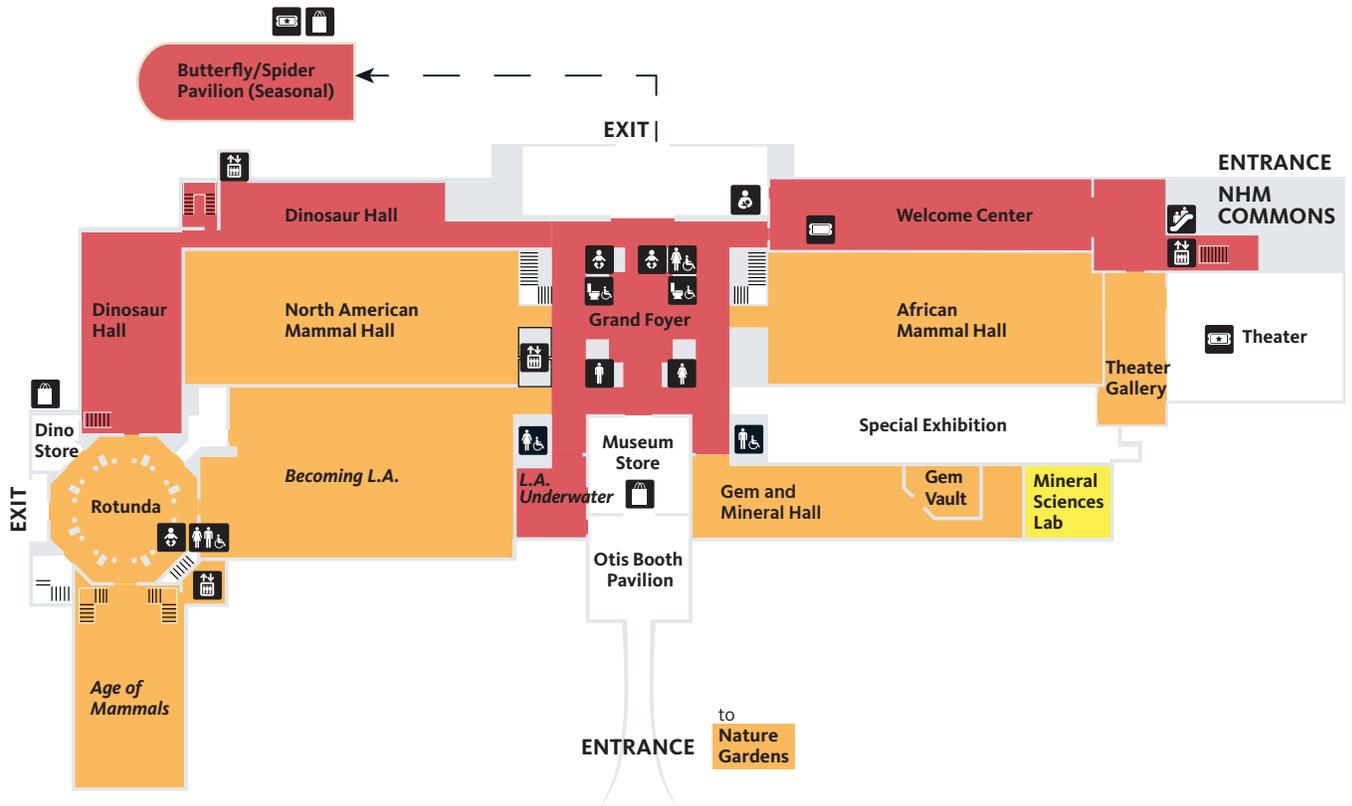
LEGEND

- Ticketed Experience
- Escalator
- Elevators
- Tickets
- Food
- Shop
- Baby Changing Station
- Lactation Room
- Restrooms
- Accessible Restrooms
- All-Gender Restroom

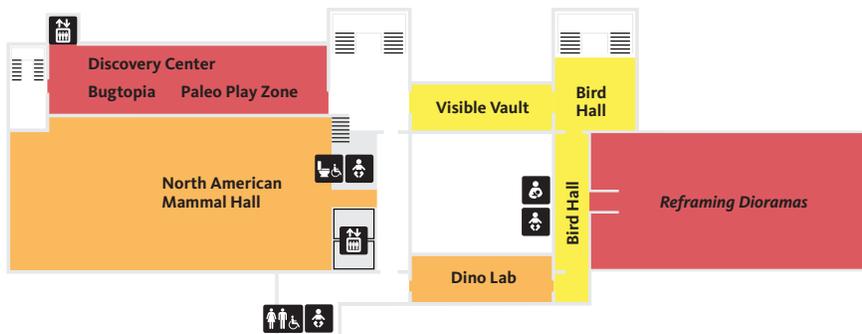
- High
- Moderate
- Low



LEVEL G



LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2



LIGHT MAP

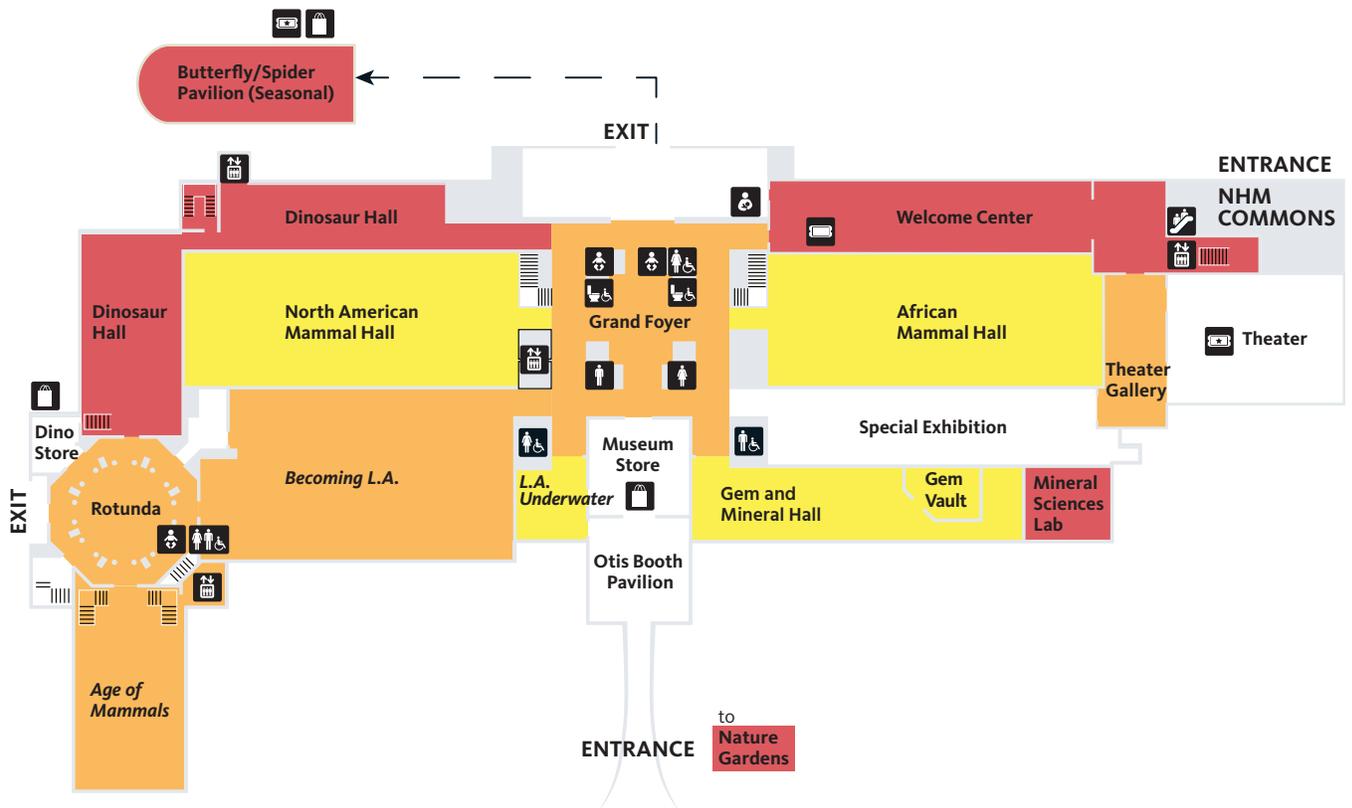
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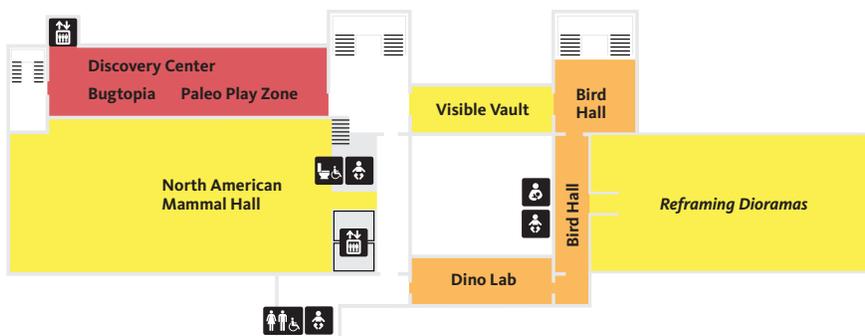
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LEVEL G



LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2

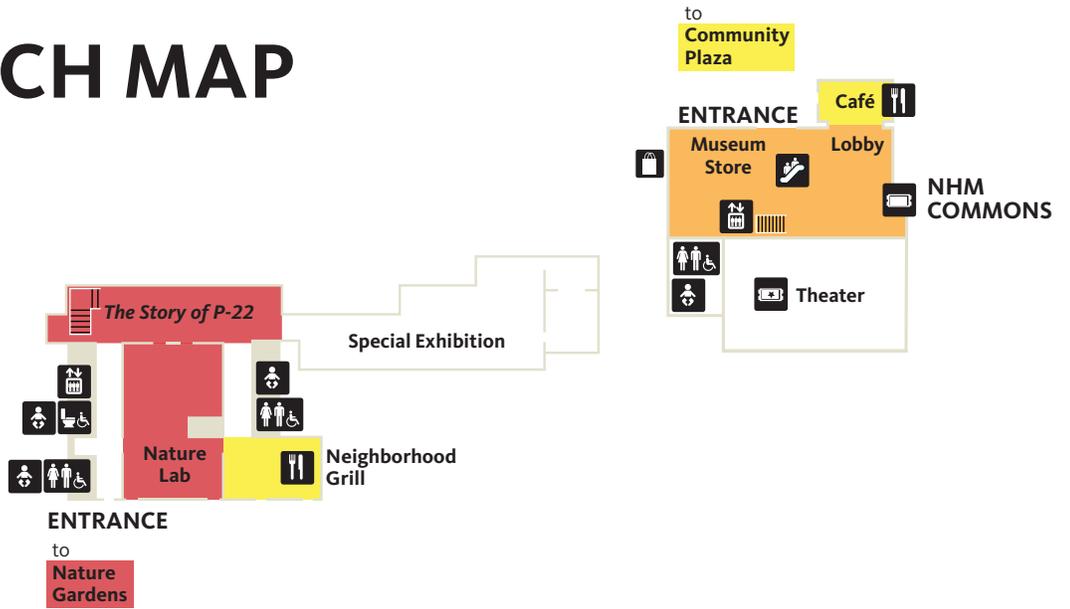


TOUCH MAP

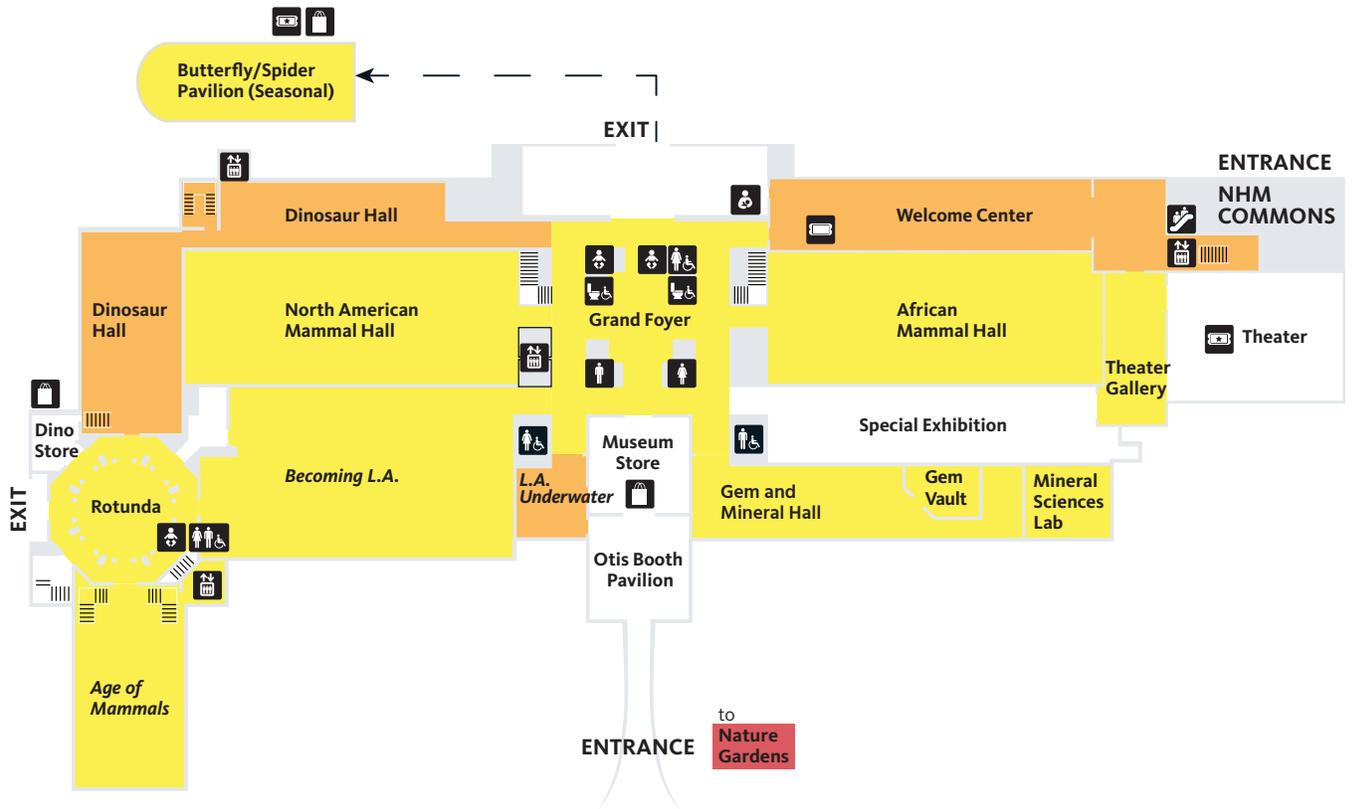
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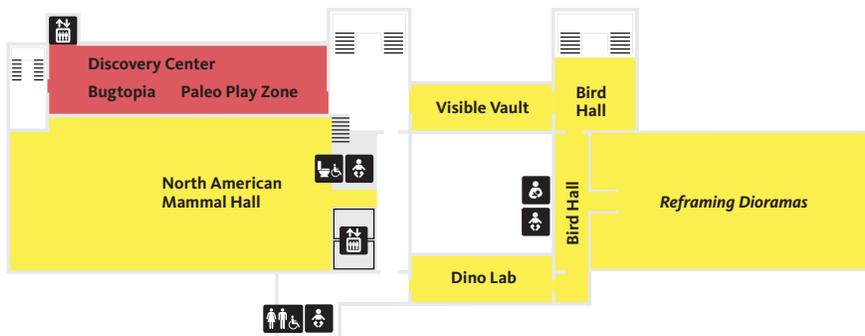
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LEVEL G



LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2

