

Exciting new resources for under 5's have arrived!

Natural History Museum, Colchester

PRESS CALL: These new resources will be launched during the January 'Busy Beetles' session on Tuesday 17 January, 10.15am – 11.15am at the Natural History Museum, Colchester.

New gallery resources specifically targeted at under 5's and their families are now available at the Natural History Museum, Colchester! These resources will encourage families to take a close-up look at the world around them with the new video microscope, birdcam and hands-on activities in the new interactive gallery trolley.

We are launching these exciting new resources with our 'Busy Beetles' session on Tuesday 17 January. Busy Beetles is a regular monthly under 5's session that runs at the Natural History Museum, which are very popular with children and their adults.

The new gallery resources include an interactive video microscope and Resource Trolley. The interactive video microscope and screen, with focus and zoom functions will allow all visitors, from our under 5's to local natural historians, to take a closer look at some of the fascinating specimens in the museums' natural history handling collection or their own finds. As well as plenty of things to handle and see under the microscope the Activity Trolley also contains a variety of hands-on activities to equip young visitors to actively explore the museum – from trails and story books, to animal glove puppets, torches and magnifying glasses.

Cllr. Nick Barlow, Economic Development and Sustainability Portfolio Holder for Colchester Borough Council commented, "Getting children involved in visiting and being part of the museum at a young age will encourage them to keep learning throughout their lives."

During our 'Busy Beetles' session, on 17 January, the children will have the chance to take a really close up look at Stag Beetles and other insects under the video microscope and then they will make their own 'magnified' bug with playdough, pipe cleaners, googly eyes and beads, then they'll make a special box to collect tiny treasures in, to bring back to see under the microscope another day. They will also have an opportunity to explore the Activity Trolley, using the magnifying glasses and torches as they explore the museum for the biggest and smallest things they can find.

Caroline Hammer, Senior Learning Officer from Colchester and Ipswich Museums says, "Following the success of our monthly under 5's sessions we have been really keen to provide resources that will inspire families to explore the museum and the world around them. The new activity trolley and microscope provide activities to spark curiosity, conversation, exploration and play, both in the museum and outside."

A successful bid secured funding of £500 from EnergySolutions and Renaissance funding led to the creation of these new exciting gallery resources especially targeted at this audience to encourage under 5's and their families to actively explore and engage with the displays when visiting the museum.

We also have a new 'birdcam', this will show live pictures, on a screen inside the museum, from the bird feeder or nest box at the back of the museum giving visitors a close up view of wildlife on their doorstep. It may take some time for the nest box to be used so in the meantime we hope to get some good action on the bird feeder.

And that's not all! A new temporary display 'Minerals and more...!' shows some of the eye catching and interesting minerals from the museums' collections. You can explore this display and find out which mineral the Egyptians used as eyeliner and which one doctors can use to look at your insides!

It's definitely time to go on another visit to the Natural History Museum, Colchester!

Natural History Museum
High Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1DN
Tuesday – Saturday 10am to 5pm, Sunday 11am to 5pm
FREE Admission