

Main Building
Natural History Branch
Nanmen Branch
Railway Department Park

National Taiwan Museum



The National Taiwan Museum System

The National Taiwan Museum (NTM) was founded in 1908 as the Affiliated Museum of the Colonization Bureau of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, Taiwan Governor-General's Office. For over a century, NTM honoured its mission of collecting, studying, displaying and promoting knowledge in the natural history, anthropology and culture of Taiwan. It lays claim to the most exquisite collection of native specimens among museums in the country. Not only has it borne witness to Taiwan's historical development, having accumulated a 100-year native collection in natural history, anthropology and culture; it is, moreover, a showcase for the many facets of Taiwan, from its native species to life in the modern era.

The NTM system comprises the Main Building which showcases Taiwan's natural history and history of humanity; the Natural History Branch which highlights the development of financial institutions in Taiwan and earth science; the Nanmen Branch which illuminates the country's industrial history; and the Railway Department Park with its focus on Taiwan's modernity. And so on. The different branches provide locals and visitors with entry points into the country's natural and cultural history and foster the construction of Taiwan's cultural subjectivity.



Main Building



The Main Building has stood before Taipei Railway Station since the early 20th century, on the north-south and east-west pivotal crossroads of old Taipei in the Qing dynasty. Elegant architecture, a rich and varied collection, and a central location have made the Main Building an important landmark in Taipei and a gem of modern architecture in the country for over a century. Architecturally, it features a Neoclassical style with a Grecian facade and a dome inspired by the Pantheon in Rome. It is arrived at by a raised platform that increases the floor area and makes the building look grander. The gable and dome are supported, hexastyle, by six Doric columns. Today, as in the past, the museum focuses on collection, research and promotion in the areas of anthropology, earth science, zoology and botany. The results of such efforts are publicised by means of themed exhibitions, educational activities, publications, and collaborative projects, through which the museum honours its public service and educational goals.

Natural History Branch



The Natural History Branch was originally the Taipei branch of Nippon Kangyo Bank. Built in 1933, the Taipei institution financed real estate and land cultivation deals for the colonial government. After WWII, it was reorganized into the Land Bank under the ROC government. Straddling a street corner, the structure has 13 columns running the length of its façade, a distinctive feature that combines the design of a classical colonnade with the local arcade. The thick columns are closely arranged, which is visually stunning and gives an impression of dependability. The sturdy pilaster and peripteral wall, and the stately decorative motifs on the capitals, walls, cornices and parapets express both Japanese aesthetics, and the architectural eclecticism of Neoclassical Revival that was in vogue in the early Showa period. This majestic bank building of almost nine decades was transformed into a museum in 2010. This has allowed it to maintain its former glory, now as living proof of multiple histories – of finance, economics, architecture, arts and crafts, and aptly, museums in Taiwan.



Nanmen Branch



The Nanmen Branch is the third NTM exhibition site to open its doors to the public, following the Main Building and the Natural History Branch. Its opening was a milestone in NTM's expansion in Taipei's old town. The Nanmen Branch functions as a museum, NTM's collections storage facility, and a landscaped park. The site was formerly the colonial-era Taipei Nanmen Factory under the Monopoly Bureau of the Taiwan Governor-General's Office. Nanmen Factory was a large chemical factory built in 1899 for the production of camphor and opium. After its closure in 1967, the land was divided up and sold off. Most of the buildings were demolished, with the exception of historic structures such as the Camphor Warehouse and the Goods Storehouse, known respectively as 'Red House' and 'Little White Palace.' These remnants are a national historic site and the key exhibition spaces of the Nanmen Branch.

Railway Department Park



The Railway Department Park is housed in a national historic site – the Taiwan Governor-General's Office Bureau of Transportation Railway Department. It is located in the heart of the capital, outside the North Gate of Taipei's old town and to the West of Taipei Railway Station. From the late Qing dynasty to the 1990s, the site housed Taiwan's first factory specialising in scientific research and production; and importantly, the headquarters of the Taiwan Railway Administration, the administrative hub of Taiwan's railway. From Machinery Bureau in the Qing dynasty through Railway Department in the Japanese era, to Taiwan Railway Administration after WWII, the site has been both a witness and embodiment of the country's modernization. There are six buildings – the Railway Department Administration Headquarters, the Power Building, the Octagon, the Tanteen, the Engineering Building, and the Wartime Command Centre. The Railway Department Park which opened its doors in 2020, showcases Taiwan's railway legacy through heritage preservation and display.





Digital reconstruction of the Formosan Republic Flag in the NTM collection

Collection and Research

The NTM collection has some 120,000 items to date, including Taiwan's native cultural assets and components of its ecosystems - all historically significant and highly representative. Among the anthropological items are the earliest and most complete collection of indigenous relics and folk artefacts in Taiwan. Of these, the 'Map of Taiwan Under the Reign of Emperor Kangxi', the portrait of Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong), and the Republic of Formosa flag featuring a yellow tiger on a blue background are known as "The Three Treasures of NTM". There are also numerous ethnographic relics from Southeast Asia and the Pacific islands, as well as currencies from different countries. In the realm of natural history, the star fossils are the large mammal fossils retrieved from the Taiwan Strait, and those from the hills of Xinhua and the Cailiao River in Tainan. Other natural history objects include rocks and minerals, like Wen stone found in basalt on the Penghu Islands, and Hokutolite, crystalized minerals from Beitou in northern Taiwan. Animal specimens cover birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, crustaceans, insects, shellfish and fish. Quite a few are endemic species or subspecies on protected lists, such as



Specimen of Rumphius' slit shell in the NTM collection

the Eurasian otter, the Mikado pheasant, Swinhoe's blue pheasant, the broad-tailed swallowtail butterfly, the Rumphius' slit shell, the Formosan landlocked salmon; and even now extinct creatures, such as the Formosan clouded leopard, the giant purple crow butterfly, and the Formosan sweetfish. Botanical specimens are mainly tracheophytes, bryophytes, algae and moss native to Taiwan. Rare plants include the world's largest flower, the stinking corpse lily, the tallest inflorescence - the Titan Arum, and the extinct *Syneilesis intermedia*. It is worth mentioning that in the museum collection, besides a considerable number of endangered and extinct species of flora and fauna, there are a hundred holotypes used by taxonomists as the basis for comparing new species or varieties. As such, their value for scientific research is unequalled.

Taiwan, whose area is but 36,000 square kilometers, has an amazingly diverse natural environment, terrain, climate and vegetation; widely varied ecosystems have given rise to rich biodiversity for which the country is known. NTM's fossil collection is representative and holds great academic value for the study of Taiwan's biodiversity and ecosystems. The museum continues to build upon this trove of foundational material, and by making specimen data and digitised research results available to researchers, contribute to the conservation of Taiwan's biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable resources.



Specimen of Formosan clouded leopard in the NTM collection



Specimen of Brownpunctate cherry-laurel in the NTM collection

Education Promotion

As a cradle of knowledge in Taiwan, the NTM launches a wide assortment of educational activities to meet different public needs throughout the year. The museum also contributes to the development of modernity in Taiwan, specifically in areas related to its core development, and its foundation which values both the natural sciences and the humanities. With the needs of different demographics in mind, we aim to spark children's interest through hands-on activities, observation and exploration, and interactive games, among other approaches. At the same time, our activities for high school and university students aim at self-learning and encourage youngsters to interpret and imagine how museums for the contemporary age should be. Through different exhibition themes, we develop a broad array of educational activities, and raise awareness of the environment and eco-conservation.



▲ The NTM provides onsite guided tours.

To give users a varied experience, we use technology to design inspirational and entertaining educational activities that bring them closer to Taiwan's cultural and biological resources; we also join hands with external partners to create a museum mascot based on our collection. We strive to ensure a diverse and friendly museum environment, that decent services are comprehensive and educational activities are in compliance with cultural equality principles. There are guided tours in Chinese at 10.30 and 14.30 daily; multilingual videos and films (Minnan, Hakka, Atayal, Paiwan, and Taiwan sign language). We have developed a virtual tour app (with information in Chinese, English and Japanese on the permanent exhibitions of all the branches; and additionally in Minnan, Hakka, Korean, Indonesian, Vietnamese, and Taiwan sign language on the permanent exhibition of this museum). There is also an app for the visually impaired featuring sign language, verbal narration of images, and assistive touch services.



▲ The circular theater in the NTM plays the 3D animation film "A Journey to Kangxi Taiwan Map."



▲ Education outreach in multiple ways including the forms of art.

Journal of the National Taiwan Museum: An academic journal founded in 1948 with an aim to promote natural history research and foster international academic exchange.
Taiwan Natural Science Quarterly: Popular science publication founded in 1982 for general readers, covering topics that include nature, anthropology, education promotion, and museology.
Cultural and creative merchandise: The NTM strives to promote "the copyright authorization of common cultural heritage and create asset"; it engages in three areas of cultural and creative development - authorisation and adding value, product development, promotion and marketing.
Mascots: The NTM has developed a host of mascots in the form of elf guardians based on its collection including "The Flag of the Formosan Republic", "Formosan clouded leopard", "Formosan sambar deer", and "mikado pheasant". All come with unique life stories that enrich the educational experience.



▲ The NTM releases new mascots in 2020.

Opening Hours

NTM Main Building and Natural History Branch, Railway Department Park: 9:30-17:00 Tue-Sun
 Nanmen Branch Park: 6:00-22:00 Mon-Sun, Exhibition Space: 9.30-17:00 Tue-Sun

Closed Mon, 31 Dec & 1st day of the Lunar Year
 Open on national holidays and consecutive holidays

Tickets

- Combined ticket for same-day visit to Main Building and Natural History Branch / Full-price \$30 / Discount and \$15
- Nanmen Branch / Full-price \$20 / Discount / \$10
- Railway Department Park / Full-price \$100 / Discount \$50
- Combined 4-museum ticket / Full-price \$130 / Discount \$65
- Half-price for the following: students, aged 6-12; seniors over 65 on weekdays; disabled persons and one accompanying carer; members of Chinese Association of Museums (CAM), ICOM and AAM (must show card); holders of the Service Honour Card.
- Membership Card \$300
- * In case of dispute or doubt, NTM's announcements on www.ntm.gov.tw prevail. The NTM reserves the right to amend all rights and conditions.

For visitors

- Please do not smoke, eat, drink, run or engage in any forms of potentially risky behaviour in the museum.
- Please do not bring food, fluids, umbrellas, dangerous or inflammable materials into the museum.
- Please follow instructions to purchase tickets; for work-related matters, please proceed to the administration building in front of the museum.
- Visitors not properly dressed or bringing pets (with the exception of guide dogs) will be denied entry.
- Please do not use flash, tripods or selfie sticks when taking photos; using photos taken for unapproved commercial and publication purposes is forbidden.
- The museum is equipped with barrier-free elevator and related equipment. Please contact the service staff of the museum.



Website QR code



IOS



Tour Guide App



Android

Contact us

Main Building: No.2 Xiangyang Rd, Zhongzheng Dist, Taipei; 02-2382-2566

Natural History Branch: No.25 Xiangyang Rd, Zhongzheng Dist, Taipei; 02-2314-2699

Nanmen Branch: No.1, Section 1, Nanchang Rd, Zhongzheng Dist, Taipei; 02-2397-3666

Railway Department Park, No.2, Section 1, Yanping North Rd, Datong Dist, Taipei; 02-2558-9790

Administration Building: 5th fl., No.71 Guanqian Rd, Zhongzheng Dist, Taipei; 02-2382-2699