

North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

Raleigh, North Carolina

Role: Design Architect and Museum Planner for New Museum

Program: Long term exhibition areas, temporary exhibition gallery, 250-seat auditorium, rooftop glass-enclosed greenhouse/conservatory, and some research and collection areas, staff offices, facilities for the museum's society, a naturalist center, library, and public roof deck, exhibit support areas, visitor service support areas, curatorial offices, major collection storage areas, underground parking area.

Building Area: 190,000 sf

Status: Opened in 2000

Description: The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences is located on Raleigh's Bicentennial Mall, one block north of the State Capitol building. As Design Architect for this major new museum, we saw a need to create a building that would entice visitors to come to the museum by imparting a clear sense that it is a place of discovery and excitement, while also responding sensitively and harmoniously to the substantial and dignified institutional buildings that share the Bicentennial Mall.

The main entrance to the building, expressed as an elegant bowfront, is an enticing welcome to visitors. The building's five story tower, topped by a conical glass conservatory, celebrates and fully exploits the opportunities created by the Jones Street corner. Around that corner, on the Jones Street side, is a long low pool with steps and fountains that will incorporate a major piece of sculpture appropriate to a natural history museum. The two-story high windows of the Whale Gallery, also along Jones Street, will offer views of the museum's magnificent whale specimens suspended inside.

The new building more than quadrupled the museum's existing spaces and doubled its exhibition areas.



