



A National Traveling Exhibit

**The dark—a place of mystery for many people. Perhaps scary, but at the same time intriguing, darkness is a state of being that seems to beckon exploration.**

**Darkness is also a natural evolutionary selective pressure that has caused plants and animals to adapt to dark ecosystems like caves, the deep sea, a forest at night, and underneath the ground.**

**Since prehistoric times, humans have sought to understand the function of darkness, and have invented ways to change it.**

**This hands-on interactive exhibit has been developed to explore and explain some of these mysteries of the dark.**

**The exhibit uses a combination of over 30 electronic, mechanical and computer interactives, fiberglass models, and graphic panels to communicate the exhibits major concepts.**

**It is available in two sizes:  
5,000 and 4,000 square feet.**

**Prepare to immerse yourself  
in the world of darkness.**



Department of Traveling Exhibits  
1301 Western Avenue  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45203  
800.733.2077, ext. 1-7061  
[cnovy@cincymuseum.org](mailto:cnovy@cincymuseum.org)

# In the Dark

## Exhibit Facts & General Requirements

Available in 5,000 sq. ft. and 4,000 sq. ft. versions

### Exhibit includes:

- 5 Large walk-around or walk-through Dioramas
- 4 Small dioramas (2 in 4,000 sq. ft.)
- 22 electronic, computer and mechanical interactives
- Resource center

### Supporting Material included with rental:

- Teacher's Guide with 10 activities
- 7 floor demonstrations
- Tales of Darkness* theatrical skit
- Complete press kit with television and radio spots
- Artwork for logotype/graphic art slicks and for brochures, posters, billboard art

Also includes on-site set-up and tear down coordination from our technicians.

### General Requirements

- 10-foot ceiling height recommended, but can adapt to 8 or 9 foot ceilings
- On-site insurance during exhibit run and transit to next venue

### Costs

- 5,000 sq. ft. version = \$55,000/13 weeks average (\$20,000 Deposit)
- Shipping-one way pro-rated = \$ 21,000 (4 - 53' trucks)

- 4,000 sq. ft. version = \$45,000/13 weeks average (\$15,000 Deposit)
- Shipping-one way pro-rated = \$21,000 (4 - 53' trucks)

### Itinerary

**For a current itinerary, please call us at 1.800.733.2077, extension 1-7061 or visit [http://www.cincymuseum.org/information\\_center/traveling\\_exhibits/Exhibits.asp](http://www.cincymuseum.org/information_center/traveling_exhibits/Exhibits.asp)**

# In the Dark

## Exhibit Contents

The exhibit features five areas: Nocturnal Environments, Underground Environments, Caverns, Deep Sea Environments, and Humans In the Dark.

**The Darkness of Night.** The first cluster of dioramas illuminates animals that occupy three terrestrial habitats when night falls: a forest in the Great Smoky Mountains; the Sonoran Desert; and a Louisiana cypress swamp. The 100-square-foot forest features a Barred Owl as it surveys the forest at night, while a spotted skunk, salamanders, and a Bobcat forage for a meal. A small diorama of the Sonoran Desert captures an Elf Owl as it spies on a Pallid Bat pursuing a scorpion, while a moth feeds on a night-blooming cactus. In the small swamp diorama a night heron contemplates the prospect of a crayfish dinner, while a Pig Frog, baby alligator, and Cotton Mouse look on.

### Features:

- Large walk-around diorama of a nocturnal forest in the Great Smoky Mountains
- Small diorama of the Sonoran Desert at night
- Small diorama of a Louisiana cypress swamp at night (*5,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> version only*)

### INTERACTIVES:

**Night vs. Day**—Identify nocturnal and diurnal species by sliding them into place in this mechanical display featuring desert and swamp habitats.

**Flashers of the Night**—Watch flashing light patterns on an electronic screen, and attempt to identify species' specific firefly signals. Every time the visitor makes a correct identification, they are "flashed".

**Who's Calling**—Listen to the sounds of several different frogs, then push buttons to match corresponding frog photographs to the sounds heard. (*5,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> version only*)

**The Pit Viper Game**—This electronic game invites visitors to place a snake puppet on their hand and re-create how snakes use heat- sensing to track their prey in the nighttime desert. Can you catch your prey?

**On the Red-eyed Express**—Discover the different methods used by birds (and other animals) to navigate at nighttime. Birds guide by the stars or by sensing the earth's magnetic field.

**Where Have all the Mammals Gone?**—In this mechanical interactive, visitors move the sun (day) and moon (night) viewers around a graphic panel to uncover the hidden animals and discover when they are most active.

**Who's Out at Night**—While viewing a mounted owl and skull, learn the physiological features that help owls locate their prey at night.

**Darkness within the Soil.** Focusing attention closer to home, the exhibit takes a look at the soil beneath human feet. A cross-section of a backyard reveals it to be teeming with life such as moles, termites, cicadas, worms, and slugs living within this seemingly solid substrate.

### Features:

- Large diorama cut-away of the ground beneath a Midwestern backyard.

### INTERACTIVES:

**More than Meets the Eye**—While peering through an illuminated panel, visitors view an unusual sight—tiny organisms in the soil that have a very important job of causing decay.

**Robomite**—In this computer game, visitors play Robomite, a termite-like character that allows visitors to investigate the underground darkness of a termite colony. Through the use of pheromones and mechanoreception, Robomite must negotiate through the colony, and interact with the other termites to find food, discover the termite queen, and map the colony before Robomite runs out of power.

**Star-nosed Mole**—The Star-nosed Mole has many fleshy appendages around its nostrils. In this computer interactive, visitors feel a tactile pad that simulates the vibrations a mole may sense within its underground world.

## In the Dark

**Darkness Deep within Caves.** Caves offer a refuge that is completely without light. Visitors receive a dramatic introduction to one type of cave as they walk through a recreation of a Kentucky cave formed by the slow action of water dissolving the limestone over the millennia. This cavern is inhabited both by animals looking for temporary darkness during the day, such as bats, and by animals whose ancestors wandered deeper into the cave and never re-emerged, such as blind cave fish, cave flatworms and cave crayfish. The 5,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> version presents a small diorama of the newly discovered Movile Cave in Romania. This fascinating structure is a “closed” cave system, with no natural egress to the upper world, and scientists are just beginning to describe its unusual features.

**Features:**

- Walk-through cave diorama of a Kentucky solution cave
- Small diorama of Movile cave, a closed-cave ecosystem in Romania (*5,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> version only*)

**INTERACTIVES:**

**A Cave Dweller’s Survival Guide**—Pretending to be a cave-dwelling creature, visitors use this guide to improve their chances for survival.

**Bats Are Great Listeners**—Visitors listen to sounds around them to echolocate like bats, and sense which way to “fly” out of a computer “cave maze”.

**Same Difference**—Using what has already been learned about cave-dwellers, visitors try to match the species to their above-ground “cousins”.

**Hole Heaven**—Visitors explore the adaptations of animals like the cave salamander to discover how they transformed into cave-dwelling species over time, by following the story in this cartoon display.

**Subterranean Superstore**—Visitors discover that animals inside most caverns are dependent upon food brought in from outside (photosynthetic) sources. But, some caves are sealed to the outside world and depend on energy from chemosynthetic sources. A mechanical interactive allows the visitor to compare the food sources of closed and open cave systems.

**Parallel World**—In this computer game, visitors can view two different cave systems, open & “closed,” and compare the similarities and differences. (*5,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> version only*)

**Be a Bat**—Kids step inside a giant model of a bat’s body and listen for the clicks representing the sonar a bat uses to locate prey. The closer objects are to the bat’s body, the faster the clicks occur (*4,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> version only*)

**Darkness of the Deep Sea.** Leaving the land, *In the Dark* plummets to the depths of the sea, offering a glimpse of an environment that is not only eternally dark, but that does not even depend on the world of light for its source of energy: a sulfur-belching vent field, two and a half kilometers below the ocean surface. Here life begins not with photosynthetic plants, but with bacteria that metabolize the sulfur released from the earth’s depths. Visitors observe Tube Worms, crabs, fish, shrimp and clams that feed on the bacteria or the life supported by it. Elsewhere in the depths of the sea, life depends on photosynthetic plankton drifting down from the area of light. A small diorama catches the magic of some of the bioluminescent inhabitants of the water column glowing in the darkness as they trawl for prey.

**Features:**

- Life-size diorama of deep-sea vents at the Galapagos Rift Vent Field
- Small diorama of the deep Pacific Ocean floor

**INTERACTIVES:**

**Deep Sea Dive**—This computer display simulating a diving bell’s instrument panel allowing visitors to view the life forms at several levels of the ocean outside the “submarine” as it plummets toward the ocean floor.

**The Mating Game**—In this mechanical matching game, visitors must decide the proper mates for certain species of deep-sea creatures. The solutions may not be as obvious as you think!

**Putting Them in Their Place**—Visitors place different ocean species in the correct ocean zones that they inhabit in this mechanical sliding game.

**Hiding in Plain Sight**—Several deep-sea creatures emit a bioluminescent light to match the light around them. Using this electronic interactive, visitors try to keep a squid hidden in the light from above.

**Keep on the Level**—Visitors stand on a full-body balancing device, similar to the body design of a jellyfish, and discover that an organ called the statocyst helps a jellyfish to orient its body as it glides through the ocean darkness.

## In the Dark

**Darkness and Humans.** Finally, in an urban residential setting, the exhibit examines the interaction of humans with darkness. Visitors explore the myths and legends that have arisen in different human cultures to interpret night and darkness; the history of making light and examine how humans have created technological adaptations to the dark (many of which parallel biological adaptations the visitor has seen elsewhere in the exhibit), and how some of these adaptations have effected the rest of the world. Satellite images dramatize how people have lit up the world, while text and graphics examine some animals such as sea turtles whose navigation in the dark is confused by our artificial lights. Visitors can try out various devices that use radar, infrared and image enhancement to see in the dark. They also can try out devices that have been specifically invented to assist people that do live in the dark, those without sight.

### **Features:**

- Life-size diorama of an urban residential setting.
- Resource center/sitting area complete with videos, books and activities for visitors to discover.

### **INTERACTIVES:**

**“Natural Technologies”**—Visitors compare the human technologies of sonar, radar, motion sensors, image-enhances and infrared sensors to their sensory biological counterparts used by creatures such as bats, insects, sharks and snakes.

**Trust Your Ears**—A tactile area (near the diorama) is featured, where sighted visitors can test their senses of hearing and touch by tapping blind canes on different surfaces as they might if they were blind.

**Test Yourself In the Dark**—Visitors must be quick! They are on candid camera. While seated in a darkened booth, visitors try to put a shaped block into its correct hole. A night vision camera displays their moves on a TV screen outside the booth for other visitors to witness.

**Resource Center**—Visitors can sit down for a quiet break to read articles or books, watch a video or play games and do In the Dark crafts in this resource area.

**Using Other Senses**—Visitors view equipment designed especially for the blind and can try them out with help of a host institution floor staff.

**The Earth At Night**—Visitors view several space images of the Earth at night. This mechanical interactive encourages them to try and identify the places these photos represent based on light visible from space.

**Maps in the Mind**—Try to visually memorize the correct path through a maze, then close your eyes, and using your finger, conquer the maze by tracing the out the visual map in your mind. This demonstrates how many sight-impaired people negotiate their environment.

**Braille**—Visitors study the Braille alphabet provided, running fingers across the letters, and then answer the trivia questions written in Braille.

# Letter of Intent

You have expressed interest in hosting the Cincinnati Museum Center's traveling exhibit:

## *In the Dark*

for the following size and venue dates: (please write in)

Size \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

To hold the indicated dates for 30 days, please complete this form and return to the Department of Traveling Exhibits at Cincinnati Museum Center at the address below. If the form is not returned, we cannot hold a slot for your organization. Within 14 days of receiving the signed Letter of Intent, CMC will issue an Exhibition Agreement to confirm the dates and provide exhibit facts and conditions. The host organization/venue will have 30 days to sign the Exhibition Agreement and submit the indicated deposit. If an Exhibition Agreement is not signed and a deposit not received within the prescribed time, the exhibit dates will be released.

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and return the original of this form to:

**Department of Traveling Exhibits**  
**Cincinnati Museum Center**  
**1301 Western Avenue**  
**Cincinnati, Ohio 45203**  
Phone: (513) 287-7061  
Fax: (513) 287-7062  
Email: [cnovy@cincymuseum.org](mailto:cnovy@cincymuseum.org)