



**“TIS THE SEASON FOR SCIENCE”
AT THE CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**

*From November 23, 2010 – January 2, 2011, the Academy celebrates
the holiday season with a scientific twist.*

SAN FRANCISCO (October 22, 2010) – From November 23 – January 2, the California Academy of Sciences will celebrate the holiday season with live reindeer, indoor snow flurries, and a suite of polar- and holiday-themed programs during “’Tis the Season for Science,” six weeks of wintry festivities and family fun with a scientific twist. Visitors can meet a pair of reindeer in-person, ask a botanist what “mistletoe” actually means, find out what causes the Northern Lights, and more, as they explore the “hows” and “whys” of life in some of Earth’s most frigid climates. Music, decorations, and a hot chocolate cart will complete the festive atmosphere.



Inside the Academy’s Piazza, visitors will find an Arctic wonderland, complete with an igloo presentation dome, holiday craft activities, and a stage for special presentations and shows including interviews with scientists, games of “Polar Jeopardy,” and a variety of music, dance, and theater performances. Young visitors can also greet “Santa Claude,” the Academy’s lovable alligator character, who will get into the holiday spirit with a Santa hat and scarf. Indoor snow flurries will dust the Piazza throughout the day, against a backdrop of stunning photographs by Arctic National Wildlife Refuge photographer Subhankar Banerjee. Nearby, guests will get a closer look at a variety of rarely displayed Arctic specimens, including a polar bear, snowy owl, and snow geese.

Each day will feature festive performances and a schedule of programs and interactive activities that explore winter themes like migration, adaptations for extreme cold, sustainable gift-giving, and research in some of our planet’s coldest climates. ‘Tis the Season for Science activities are included with general admission tickets, unless otherwise noted. Visit www.calacademy.org/holidays for more details.

**Special Program Highlights
November 23 – January 2**

Reindeer Rendezvous – Drop-in daily in the east garden

Visit the east garden to meet the two reindeer (also known as caribou in North America) that have come to visit the Academy for the holidays. Learn about the special adaptations that help these antlered herbivores survive in cold environments and travel great distances, and discover how they acquired such a special place in holiday traditions.

Polar Perspectives - Shows daily in the Piazza

Step into the igloo presentation dome for a glimpse of the stark, vast beauty of the North Pole. Rotating 5-minute shows will tell the stories of the Northern Lights, polar ice caps, and the winter sky with stunning HD footage and twinkling stars.

Polar Jeopardy – Daily at 11am and 3pm in the Piazza

Think you know a thing or two about polar bears, emperor penguins, and the Northern Lights? Want to challenge your knowledge of Earth's frozen caps? Or want to watch your friends and family put on their thinking caps? Come take part in this fun, interactive game show, and expand your polar expertise.

Arctic Exploration – Daily at 12:30pm at Science in Action

Explore one of the least-visited corners of our beautiful earth, the extreme North, using Google Earth software. We will travel from the ice of the Arctic, to the evergreen boreal forests and beyond, with time leftover to return to the beaches of California.

Cold-Blooded Live Animals – Daily at 1pm in the Piazza

The Academy's wintry wonderland will not keep its cold-blooded friends from making an appearance! Come see several live snakes handled by the Academy's expert staff, and learn about snakes' amazing attributes and roles in their natural ecosystems.

“Chill Out” with an Academy Scientist – Every Wednesday at 2pm in the Piazza

Meet Academy scientists who study plants, animals, and climate change in some of the planet's coldest environments. In their travels, these explorers have studied high-elevation ice beetles, Arctic migrations, frozen clams and warming ice caps. Join them for a fascinating look at their work to explore the world, discover new life, and help explain Earth's amazing story.

Festive Performers – Check website for schedule

The Academy has invited a variety of musicians, singers, dancers, theatrical groups, and other performers to help visitors celebrate this festive time of year. Enrich your family's Academy visit with art and music from some of the Bay Area's greatest talents.

Penguins + Pajamas Sleepover (Kids ages 6+ and their adult chaperones)

Tuesday, December 28

Why count sheep when you could count geckos, butterflies, sharks, and penguins? Now kids can camp out for a night at the California Academy of Sciences—and see the museum in a whole new light. Sleepovers include after-hours access to Academy exhibits, a special penguin talk, live animal demonstration, planetarium show, story time with cookies and milk, parking, breakfast, and more. *Tickets \$119 per person (\$99 for Academy members), available at www.calacademy.org/sleepovers.*

The “'Tis the Season for Science” theme will also continue across regularly scheduled Academy programs, including Science Story Adventures, Family Nature Crafts, Specimen Spotlight, and Animal Tales.

The Academy will be closed on November 25 and December 25, and will observe extended hours (until 6pm) from November 26-28, December 26-30, and January 1-2.

General description

"Tis the Season for Science" at the California Academy of Sciences

November 23, 2010 - January 2, 2011

Step into an Arctic wonderland where you can meet live reindeer, crawl into an igloo, see the Northern Lights, and learn how polar bears and their neighbors survive the harsh winter. Young visitors can also meet "Santa Claude," the Academy's lovable alligator character, who will get into the holiday spirit with a Santa hat and scarf. Holiday music and dance performances, indoor snow flurries, and a hot chocolate cart will complete the festive atmosphere. Encounters with Arctic specimens and the scientists who study them will offer a delightful new take on celebrating the blustery holiday season. *'Tis the Season for Science activities are included with general admission tickets. Purchase tickets online at <http://www.calacademy.org>, or at the door. California Academy of Sciences, 55 Music Concourse Drive, San Francisco.*

The California Academy of Sciences is home to Steinhart Aquarium, Morrison Planetarium, Kimball Natural History Museum, and world-class research and education programs—all under one living roof. Admission to the Academy is: \$29.95 for adults; \$24.95 for youth ages 12 to 17, Seniors ages 65+ and students with valid ID; \$19.95 for children ages 4 to 11; and free for children ages 3 and younger. The Academy is free to the public on the third Wednesday of each month. Admission fees include all exhibits and shows. Hours are 9:30 am – 5:00 pm Monday – Saturday, and 11:00 am – 5:00 pm on Sunday. The Academy is closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas. During peak periods, including some holiday weekends, an admission surcharge and extended hours may apply. Visit www.calacademy.org or call (415) 379-8000 for more information.

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