

Permanent Exhibit Outdoor Expansion

BioQuest Catch the Wind



Catch the Wind is designed to expand visitors' understanding of how plants and animals use and accommodate wind. What is now an open, grassy hill will ultimately be a series of large-scale interactive, environmental exhibits. A Seed Tower lets visitors build and send large-scale seeds up a thirty-foot tower to experiment with aerodynamics and examine their twirling flight to ground; a Wind Yard puts visitors at the control of gale force winds to learn how plants survive the aerial environment; a large-scale Sailboat Pond and water table invite visitors to experiment with sail engineering and the effect of air currents.

Floating Rings • Turn off the main walkway into the area of Floating Rings and take in the visual wonder designed by Ned Kahn, McArthur Fellow whose work draws from a palette of natural phenomena to reveal the beauty of the forces that shape our world. His highly tuned visual sensibility and his inventive examinations inspire appreciation and respect of the natural world. Kahn's work is accessible to a vast and diverse audience, attracting and holding the attention of children, adults, artists, and physicists alike. Aim one of four air cannons at an array of panels covered by hundreds of small aluminum panels that are hinged to move freely in the wind. As invisible vortex rings of air strike these kinetic membranes, the panels appear to move in the wind and create the impression of waves in a field of metallic grass, thus revealing the ever-changing patterns of the invisible wind.

Wings of Flight • Experience the Leonardo da Vinci inspired contraption we call *Ornithopter* with its flapping wings outstretched 24 feet. These wings raise and lower the visitor above the ground demonstrating on a human scale the power of bird wings to lift. Because the rig is counterbalanced, your weight nears zero and the wings really do the work.

Contemplative Bird Garden • Enter the wooded landscape of the Contemplative Bird Garden and take a seat on one of the nearby benches. The whirl of other Museum activities recedes in this cozy garden where environmental artwork and bird feeders attract season after season of native birds. Audio exhibits educate you on the vocalization and migration of the birds you see.

Traveling Seeds • Send giant seed models up a 30-foot tower and watch them spiral and flip to the ground. It's an exploration of aerodynamics – what a seed has to do to get out from under its mother tree in order to have enough sunlight to germinate.

Dancing Plants • Steer a large high powered fan across a landscape of trees, shrubs and tall grasses in the Wind Yard to learn how plants are designed to shed the wind and avoid being blown over.

Sailboats • Take control of a remote-control sailboat in our 100-foot Sailboat Pond, and experiment with sail design shapes on table-top water basins...