“In every walk with Nature one receives far more than he seeks.”

– John Muir
As a botanist, John Muir’s fondness for the nature and beauty of plants contributed significantly to his understanding of the need to preserve wilderness. Yet this aspect of the well-known conservationist’s passions is little known. In the same spirit John Muir embraced the botanical world, this traveling exhibition Nature’s Beloved Son: Rediscovering John Muir’s Botanical Legacy traces his travels to Canada, Indiana, the American southeast, California, and Alaska, and presents vivid images and specimens of the actual plants that Muir held in his hands, carried in his pockets, and preserved for all time.

Several hundred of these plant specimens were scanned at herbaria throughout North America and digitally enhanced by Pleasant Hill photographer Stephen J. Joseph and studied under the direction of Muir scholar and curator Bonnie Gisel. Having collaborated to create an exquisite and informative book published by Heyday Books (2008), they now pour their talents into this traveling exhibition.

Nature’s Beloved Son includes high-resolution images of Muir’s plant specimens on large format canvas and paper prints, allowing the exploration of the structures, patterns, and anatomies of the plant world. Historic images, pages and drawings from Muir’s journals set the context for his plant collecting and a set of original plant specimens shows visitors the real thing. To further inspire, the exhibition includes several quotes from Muir about his fascination with nature and devotion to plants. A film shown in the gallery and narrated by the curator and Muir re-enactor Frank Helling, features additional plant specimens and historic images.

Nature’s Beloved Son is traveling to museums, botanical gardens, and parks throughout North America, appealing to a wide range of visitors including people interested in botany, history, environmentalism, John Muir himself, and art. Through the beauty of botany visitors are asked how nature might inspire them as it did John Muir so profoundly and reflect on the status of the biodiversity of plants in today’s world.

**Exhibition on display October 13 – December 4, 2011**
**Monday – Saturday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM**
**Sunday, Noon – 5:00 PM**

**GUIDED GALLERY TOURS**
Complimentary docent-led group tours are available by appointment. This is an exciting outing for school groups, garden clubs, horticultural societies, artists, gardeners, outdoor enthusiasts, historians, and environmentalists.

For information, call 404.814.4046 or email SCatron@AtlantaHistoryCenter.com.

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