

COMMUNITY EVENT | UConn Extension's Bug Week: Parasite Day!

Thursday July 27, 2023

Noon-4pm

University of Connecticut, Biology/Physics Building Lobby
91 N. Eagleville Rd, Storrs, CT

Come explore the wonderful, under-appreciated world of parasites with the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History!

Connecticut State
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Celebrate UConn Extension's ninth annual Bug Week with the CSMNH and the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at UConn Storrs on **Parasite Day 2023!**

Participants will learn the defining features of a parasite and gain experience with microscopes by viewing real natural history specimens. Enjoy displays and activities for all ages: see real museum specimens up close, learn about parasites from diverse environments through games and scavenger hunts, take a tour of the [EEB Biodiversity Research Collections](#), and hear about ways to keep your pets parasite free from UConn Police Department K9 Officer Carson (and their human handler Officer O'Reilly).

This event is FREE and open to the public! Visit <https://csmnh.uconn.edu/programs> for more information.

If you require an accommodation to participate in this event, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu **by Monday July 24, 2023.**

[Bug Week](#) is an annual public education program sponsored by [UConn Extension](#). The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History is part of the [Institute of the Environment](#) at the University of Connecticut.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Natural History Museum Highlights Parasites Big and Small

The goal of Parasite Day, a museum program being held at UConn Storrs on July 27, is to discover the wonderful, under-appreciated world of parasites.

Storrs, CT – The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History is once again highlighting parasites big and small during UConn Extension's ninth annual Bug Week! The goal of Parasite Day, a museum program being held at UConn Storrs on July 27, is to discover the wonderful, under-appreciated world of parasites. The museum invites visitors to come explore a wide variety of specimens illustrating the



phenomenal diversity of animal parasites, including flukes, arthropods, tapeworms, nematodes, and other parasite groups. Participants will learn the defining features of a parasite through games and scavenger hunts, and gain experience with microscopes by viewing real natural history specimens.

The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History (CSMNH) and the [Biodiversity Research Collections \(BRC\)](#) in the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology (EEB) at UConn Storrs will put dozens of specimens on exhibit for Parasite Day. The emphasis this year will be on the interactions between parasites and their hosts, with specimens of both on display. Mammals are a common host for parasites and our furry pet friends can carry many kinds of parasites, like fleas and ticks. K9 Officer Carson and his human handler Officer John O'Reilly of the UConn Police Department's Community Outreach Unit will be joining the CSMNH to talk to the public about how they stay parasite free.

Also returning for this year's Parasite Day is a team of EEB researchers who study the nest parasites of



bluebirds. The [Nest Parasite Community Science Project](#) (NPCS) team, led by Dr. Sarah Knutie, will be on site with preserved specimens and activities that teach ecological field research methods. Visitors can examine an oversized replica of a bluebird nest to learn about the parasites commonly observed by Dr. Knutie's group and how they gather data for their research.

Parasitic relationships don't just occur in the animal world, so the [EEB Botanical Conservatory Greenhouse](#) is sharing in the fun with a Parasitic Plant Scavenger Hunt. To complement the many specimens featured in the lobby and greenhouse, the EEB BRC will also be holding behind-the-scenes tours every 45 minutes starting at 1:30pm. These tours will showcase parasitic insect specimens as well as parasitic plants from the preserved collections of the herbarium.

Parasites have a bad reputation, and the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History's motivation in hosting Parasite Day is to reveal to the public just how awesome parasites are! Guests who visit all the displays and complete all the day's activities can enter a drawing to win a set of Parasite Pals, among other prizes and giveaways.

The broader purpose of UConn Extension's Bug Week program is to educate the community about the importance of bugs and insects. Bugs are the unsung heroes of our ecosystem. They pollinate our crops and gardens, prey on pest insects, and aerate soils by breaking up decaying material to recycle nutrients. Bug Week 2023 runs from July 24 to July 29, with programs happening at locations around the state, including at the UConn Spring Valley Farm in Storrs, Connecticut Science Center in Hartford, and Extension offices in Haddam and Norwich. The full list of Bug Week programs can be found at <https://bugs.uconn.edu/>.

Parasite Day is a free community event and open to the public!!! It will be held in the Biology/Physics Building lobby at 91 N. Eagleville Rd in Storrs, CT from noon to 4pm on July 27, 2023.

Visit <https://csmnh.uconn.edu/programs> for parking information and additional details.

If you require accommodations to participate, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu by **Monday July 24, 2023**.

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