WORKSHOP | Periodic Table: The Elements Explained with Dr. Christian Brückner

Saturday, February 21, 2026
1-3pm
Periodic Table Display, Chemistry Building, UConn Storrs
Located on the 2nd Floor Atrium of UConn's Chemistry Building
55 N. Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT

Learn about the importance of the periodic table and what its arrangement tells us about each element from Dr. Christian Brückner, the creator of the Chemistry Department's Periodic Table Display. Through a short presentation, an interactive Q&A and hands on experience with items made from a variety of elements, participants will discover the many ways chemistry influences our daily lives.

The Periodic Table Display is open to the public, but this special event with Dr. Brückner provides a unique opportunity to hear not only about the natural history of the elements but about the history of the artifacts used to represent them.

If you require an accommodation to participate in this event, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu **by Monday February 16, 2026.**

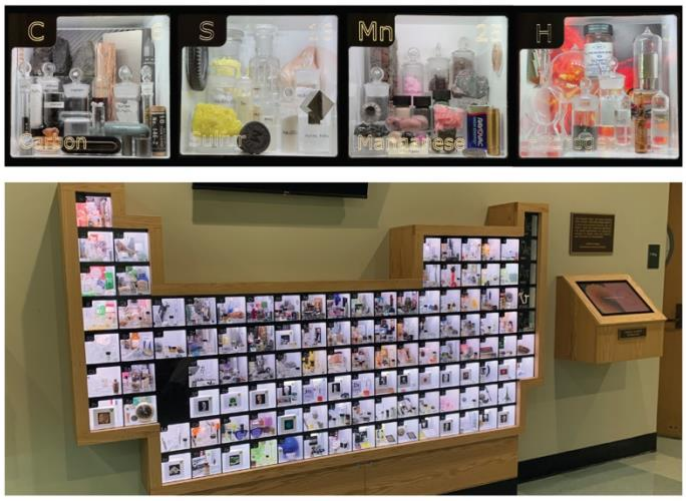
The event is free and open to the public, but registration is required and limited to 25 participants aged 8+.

Visit https://csmnh.uconn.edu/programs/ for more information and to register.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UCONN PROFESSOR INTRODUCES THE WONDERS OF THE ELEMENTS THROUGH A HANDS ON WORKSHOP

Storrs, CT— The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History will host a workshop about the periodic table of elements this February at the University of Connecticut. Learn about the importance of the periodic table and what its arrangement tells us about each element from Dr. Christian Brückner, the creator of the Chemistry Department's Periodic Table Display. Through a short presentation, an interactive Q&A and hands on experience with items made from a variety of elements, participants will discover the many ways chemistry influences our daily lives.



This composite photograph shows the entire Periodic Table Display along with close up images of four different elements: carbon, sulfur, manganese and hydrogen. (Photos by Peter Morenus/UConn Photo)

The program will center around the Periodic Table Display that houses over 1,200 examples of the elements, compounds, minerals, and natural and synthetic materials that illustrate the 118 known elements. The project was conceived of, and set up by, Chemistry faculty member Christian Brückner, who spent decades collecting samples while dreaming of a way to display them. Dr. Brückner sourced samples from the research laboratories at UConn, mineral collections, and the drugstore. Alumni, colleagues, family, and friends contributed. Some samples come from outer space, the atmosphere, land, or the bottom of the ocean. Humans, plants, and animals are represented. Some items represent cutting-edge technology, while others are genuine antiques or are contemporary and can be found in most households today. The display illustrates how chemistry touches nearly all areas of life, with highlights on applications in medicine, engineering, the arts, biology. Examples also show how history and politics all have a hand in shaping the modern periodic table.

The Periodic Table Display is accessible during all times the Chemistry Building is open (including weekends) with illumination daily from 9 am to 7 pm.

This special event with Dr. Brückner provides a unique opportunity to hear not only about the natural history of the elements but also about the history of the artifacts used to represent them.

UConn Chemistry Department faculty member Christian Brückner places items representing elements in the interactive Periodic Table Display as it was being installed in the Chemistry Building on Aug. 26, 2022. (Sydney Herdle/UConn Photo)

Dr. Christian Brückner is a Professor in the Department of Chemistry at UConn; he served as past Department Head. He earned a Diplom degree from the Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hchschule (RWTH) Aachen, Germany, and a Ph.D. from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

After a postdoctoral appointment at the University of California at Berkeley, he joined UConn in 1998. In 2024, he held a sabbatical appointment in Yale University's Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology. His research focuses on synthetic chemistry, with a focus on porphyrins and related pigments.

This even will be held on Saturday, February 21 from 1–3pm at the Periodic Table Display on the 2nd Floor Atrium of the Chemistry Building at UConn Storrs. The Chemistry Building is located at 55 N. Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT.

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The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History is a unit of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UConn.

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