

# Clark Professor Hibbett Teams With EcoTarium to Create 'Fungal Tree of Life' Exhibit

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*GoLocalWorcester Lifestyle Team*

Clark University biology professor David Hibbett teamed up with alumni to create a new fungus exhibit at the EcoTarium.

"It was great to partner with them. On my own I would have produced something very different and not as effective for their community of visitors," said Hibbett.

The exhibit, titled "Fungal Tree of Life" features artwork by Clark alum Amy Yeager.

Hibbett will lead museum visitors through a tour of the fungus exhibit at Noon on Saturday, September 8, at the EcoTarium, 222 Harrington Way, Worcester.

The tour will be preceded by a Fungus Foray at 10:30 a.m.

## About The Exhibit

Hibbett has been collaborating with Betsy Loring, director of Exhibits and Facilities at the EcoTarium, since 2015, when they received a grant from the National Science Foundation to bring information about fungi and wood decomposition to a wide audience. Scientists in labs at the University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin, University of Toronto, and the University of California, Berkeley, have also contributed.

Loring and the EcoTarium staff started the process in the winter of 2015 by surveying museum visitors to determine what the public did and did not know about fungi.

The exhibit is a permanent display at the EcoTarium, and could remain on the museum's main floor for up to a decade.

The fungus exhibit, which takes up a fraction of the main floor and comprises three exhibit stations with interactive panel displays and samples, is designed to be informative, educational, and fun (not to mention durable and resilient!).

It is situated alongside portions of "City Science," an urban ecology exhibit created in 2013 by former Clark geography professor Colin Polsky and his undergraduate students.

## About Hibbett

Hibbett has been with Clark since 1999 and is considered one of today's leading researchers in the analysis of fungal relationships through DNA analysis.

At Clark, he concentrates his lab work in evolutionary biology and ecology of fungi.

He documented his partnership with the EcoTarium on his blog.



*David Hibbett*