



**Impact Planning, Evaluation & Audience Research**

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# **Baseline Study: Page Museum and La Brea Tar Pits**

*Prepared for the*  
**Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County  
Los Angeles, CA**

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# SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

## INTRODUCTION

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) contracted Randi Korn & Associates, Inc. (RK&A) to conduct audience research for the Page Museum (the Page) and La Brea Tar Pits (Tar Pits) as part of an overall strategy to examine the site's current state and determine plans for its future. The goal of the study was to understand and compare Hancock Park users who visit the Page Museum (referred to throughout as “visitors”) to those who do not visit the Page Museum (referred to throughout as “non-visitors”) by exploring their perceptions of the Tar Pits and Page Museum; the meaning they construct from their experience that day; and their knowledge of current scientific research taking place at the site. RK&A conducted 54 interviews total—30 visitors and 24 with non-visitors.

**Note that the key findings summarized and discussed below are the results that stand out as most prevalent and important. Many more details are in the Principal Findings section, beginning on page 3. Details about methodology and sampling are on pages 2-3.**

## KEY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Below we present the key findings, numbered in bold. Each key finding is supported by a bulleted list of evidence followed by a narrative explanation. At the end we provide concluding remarks and recommendations.

### **1. Page Museum visitors and non-visitors are similar demographically with one exception: Museum visitors are slightly older than non-visitors.**

- ◆ Visitors and non-visitors are similar in terms of gender (56 percent are male and 44 percent are female).
- ◆ Visitors are older than non-visitors (median age of 45 and 33, respectively).
- ◆ There is no discernible difference in the ethnicity (59 percent of interviewees identified as Caucasian/White, and 20 percent identified as Hispanic) or residence (40 percent are from the Los Angeles area).
- ◆ Visitors and non-visitors have similar levels of education (64 percent of visitors and 70 percent of non-visitors have college or graduate degrees).

As discussed further below, visitors and non-visitors are also more alike than different when it comes to their interests and perceptions of the Tar Pits as well as their basic knowledge of science. So it is not surprising that they are similar demographically. This is promising for the Page Museum because it indicates potential for attracting non-visitors to the Museum (as will be discussed below). On the other hand, the age difference is noteworthy, as it may present implications for attracting younger non-visitors to the Museum.

**2. Page Museum visitors are demographically *different* than visitors of Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC)—Page visitors are older, less diverse, and have higher levels of education.**

- ◆ 60 percent of Page visitors report being Caucasian compared to 37 percent of visitors to NHMLAC.
- ◆ The median age of Page visitors is 45; the median age of NHMLAC is 35
- ◆ 64 percent of Page visitors have a college degree or higher, compared to 36 percent of visitors to NHMLAC

Perhaps the difference in Page Museum and NHMLAC visitors is due to location—as the Page is located in a more affluent neighborhood than NHMLAC. Or perhaps people with high levels of education are more likely to be aware of the Tar Pits. Regardless of the reason, these differences are important to note. While Page Museum staff may assume that the audiences at the two sites are the same demographically, this study along with the 2009 NHMLAC audience study shows that is not the case.

**3. Among Page visitors and non-visitors, awareness of and interest in the Tar Pits is high, but awareness of the Page Museum is low.**

- ◆ Nearly all visitors and non-visitors (93 percent) were aware of the Tar Pits prior to arriving at Hancock Park and had visited at least one Tar Pit that day (93 percent).
- ◆ Many visitors' and non-visitors' primary motivation for visiting Hancock Park that day was to see the Tar Pits (61 percent).
- ◆ Only 40 percent of visitors and 33 percent of non-visitors said they were aware of the Page Museum prior to visiting the park.

The fact that those visiting Hancock Park have high awareness of and interest in the Tar Pits is one of the most optimistic findings of the study is. Regardless of their reason for being in Hancock Park, nearly all interviewees said they knew about the Tar Pits prior to arriving to the park, and many said the reason they were in the park was to see the Tar Pits. On the other hand, one of the most negative findings of the study is park visitors' low awareness of the Museum, even among those who ultimately visited the Museum. These findings suggest an opportunity, in that that a relatively large portion of park visitors are interested in the Tar Pits, and they also may be *potential* visitors to the Page Museum if they know about the Museum in advance and could plan adequate time to visit both.

**4. A visit to the Page Museum is associated with a thorough and specific understanding of what happened in the Tar Pits.**

- ◆ Nearly all visitors (97 percent) but just one-half of non-visitors (50 percent) demonstrated an understanding that animals wandered into the Tar Pits and got trapped by the tar, some going so far as to say the animals were preserved by the tar.
- ◆ Most visitors and non-visitors (84 percent) described the Tar Pits in one of two ways—using generally positive all-embracing words like “interesting” and “unique” or they reference their physical attributes, such as that they are “smelly” and “sticky.”
- ◆ Most visitors and non-visitors (92 percent) said that the Page Museum houses fossils and bones found in the Tar Pits.
- ◆ Few misconceptions emerged from either audience.

There are a few noteworthy differences between the two audience segments. Slightly more Page visitors than non-visitors also said (accurately) that the animals were preserved in the tar. And, about one-quarter of non-visitors were confused by the Tar Pits or not able to describe the Tar Pits or explain what happened in them; while this was not the case for any Page visitors.

**5. Results indicate that the outdoor Tar Pits experience is disappointing to some visitors and non-visitors and incites only moderate levels of interest and curiosity.**

- ◆ When asked what they liked most about their experience that day, only 19 percent of visitors and non-visitors named the Tar Pits.
- ◆ About 20 percent of visitors and non-visitors named something about the Tar Pits as their least favorite aspect of their visit to the park that day.
- ◆ More than half of visitors and non-visitors said they had no questions or curiosities about the Tar Pits (54 percent); 40 percent had questions about the Tar Pits such as what had been found in them and what the scientists were studying.

Results show that a visit to the Tar Pits is not an entirely satisfying experience, and this dissatisfaction may account for the fact that some people do not bother to visit the Museum. A portion of both audience segments talked negatively about the Tar Pits, with more non-visitors making negative comments than visitors. Negative comments included that the Tar Pits are “boring,” “blocked off,” “[seem] neglected,” and “[devoid] of anything to do.” And, even though one-half the non-visitors said they came to the park to see the Tar Pits that day, most of them did not name the Tar Pits as the most enjoyable part of their visit. Instead, many non-visitors said they most enjoyed being outdoors, and most visitors named something about the Museum. Also, a lack of questions and curiosities expressed by visitors and non-visitors suggest they may not have been stimulated. Finally, a portion of both visitors and non-visitors complained about the Tar Pits signage noting a lack of information and confusing wayfinding.

**6. Park visitors who visit the Page Museum seem to learn more and develop a deeper appreciation of the significance of the Tar Pits compared to park visitors who go to the outdoor Tar Pits only.**

- ◆ When describing what was most compelling about the Tar Pits, 74 percent of visitors named the fossils and animals found in the Tar Pits or the scientific research being done, but no non-visitors named either of these things. Rather, 54 percent of non-visitors said the size and appearance of the Tar Pits were most compelling.

Even though Page and non-Page visitors are nearly identical demographically and almost all of them visited at least one outdoor Tar Pit, their understanding of the Tar Pits is noticeably different. Page visitors have a deeper understanding of the Tar Pits compared to non-Page visitors. For instance, findings show that Page visitors learned the significance of the Tar Pits, with many of them describing and/or reporting the number and range of fossil types in the Tar Pits and the current work scientists are doing. On the contrary, even though most non-Page visitors spent time at a Tar Pit, their learning was superficial; most described the more obvious sensory attributes of the Tar Pits as compelling, for example their strong smell, size, and bubbling.

**7. Visitors to the Page Museum have a more accurate understanding of the work scientists are doing in the Tar Pits and Page Museum compared to those who visited the outdoor Tar Pits only.**

- ◆ More visitors than non-visitors are aware that scientists are currently working in the Tar Pits (77 percent and 58 percent, respectively).
- ◆ More than one-half of visitors and non-visitors accurately said that scientists study paleontology, fossils, or bones from the past and in the Tar Pits.
- ◆ However, when interviewees became more specific, visitors demonstrated more accurate understandings of the nature of the scientific research compared to non-visitors. For instance, as their responses became more specific, 44 percent of visitors said scientists are studying life in the past and or that scientists are studying plants that have been excavated from the Tar Pits, while 38 percent of non-visitors demonstrated misconceptions.

In our sample, almost all Page visitors and one-half of non-visitors said they are aware that scientists are working in the Tar Pits. And, generally speaking, the two audience segments have similar ideas about what the scientists are doing, with many of them saying that the scientists are studying natural history, paleontology, fossils, bones, or animals. Nevertheless, when their responses became more specific, more non-visitors provided slightly or totally inaccurate explanations about scientists' work, including those who said scientists are studying chemicals, petroleum, or geology, or looking at current atmospheric conditions to ensure that the Tar Pits remain in stable condition. This difference between visitors' and non-visitors' knowledge suggests that Museum visitors learned more about scientific research.

**8. The two audience segments are similar in their understandings of the Tar Pits' connection to the Ice Age; these understandings are generally accurate. However, many have an inaccurate understanding of the Ice Age.**

- ◆ The majority of visitors and non-visitors said that scientists' work can tell us about the conditions present during the Ice Age or that the fossils scientists study come from animals that were alive and died around the time of the Ice Age (48 percent and 46 percent, respectively)
- ◆ Nearly one-half of all interviewees described the Ice Age mostly inaccurate, saying, "the Ice Age was a time when the Earth was covered with ice" or "when glaciers covered the majority of the planet" (46 percent).

Notably, the Ice Age did not come up unprompted in the way any interviewees spoke about the Tar Pits, indicating that it is not something they readily know or that is top-of-mind. However, when asked about the relationship between scientists' work and the Ice Age, most people, even non-visitors who did not come specifically to see the Tar Pits, were able to speculate and give a relatively accurate, if general, response—it was not a completely foreign or surprising notion to them. When asked, most said that the animals found in the Tar Pits had come from the Ice Age; a portion went further to say that the scientists' work can tell us about the animals and their adaptations and/or the climate of the Ice Age. Very few did not answer the question or gave incorrect responses.

On the other hand, when asked more specifically what "Ice Age" means to them, the two audience segments provided mostly inaccurate responses. One-half of both audiences incorrectly said the Ice Age was a time when Earth was frozen, covered in ice and glaciers. Others vaguely mentioned that the Ice Age was a "long, long" time ago. A small portion in both audience groups accurately described the Ice Age as a time when the Earth's temperature was cooler and many animals faced extinction.

**9. There are many people who visit Hancock Park mostly for recreational reasons; yet they are also aware of and interested in the Tar Pits.**

- ◆ Most non-visitors reported visiting the park to be outside (33 percent), to visit LACMA (25 percent), or because they visit the park regularly (21 percent).
- ◆ Yet, 54 percent of these non-visitors said they *also* came to the park to see the Tar Pits.
- ◆ Nearly all non-visitors highlighted aspects of their park experience as the thing they enjoyed most about their visit (97 percent), including the weather and the grounds. (Of these, 20 percent said they also enjoyed the Tar Pits as part of their park experience.)
- ◆ 117 people in Hancock Park declined to participate in an interview. From reasons given and general observations, it seems that most non-participants had not visited the Museum that day. Rather most were in the park for recreational reasons (to eat lunch, walk a dog, play soccer, and attend the Pet Adoption Festival).

While we know many people are visiting the park primarily for recreational reasons, data also indicate that non-visitors, regardless of purpose of visit, are likely to be aware of the Tar Pits and probably stopped to look at one. However, the Tar Pits are not the highlight of the visit for most of these non-visitors—instead being outside, the weather, and eating lunch outside is what these visitors most enjoy. It is possible they have visited the Museum in the past, but it is unlikely they are Museum members or that they visit frequently. Obviously the Page Museum shares space with a large recreational resource and there will always be a portion of people who truly just want to use it for that purpose.

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals a wealth of information about Hancock Park visitors' relationship to the Tar Pits and Page Museum. Most noteworthy is that even though all park visitors in our sample are similar demographically, visitors to the Museum learn more about the significance of the Tar Pits and the work scientists are doing than non-visitors. The fact that Page Museum visitors leave the park with a more developed sense of the site compared to those who simply visit the outdoor Tar Pits may be due to the wealth of information available in the Museum. While it would be ideal for these park visitors to visit the Museum, some of them simply may not feel inclined to do so. Thus, the park may need to provide other interpretive options for them if learning is going to take place. To understand the possibilities, it may be helpful to consider *why* these non-Page visitors decide not to go to the Museum.

- ◆ There is remarkably low awareness of the Page Museum, especially compared to the very high awareness of the Tar Pits. Somehow the Museum has not come to be associated with the Tar Pits in the public's mind. So people who plan a visit to the Tar Pits are unaware of the Museum and may not have allotted enough time to see both.
- ◆ The Tar Pits are somewhat disappointing and may not stimulate interest in the Museum. For instance, among visitors and non-visitors, there is a noticeable difference between the number of people who said they came to see the Tar Pits and the number who named them as the best part of their visit. On top of this, a portion of interviewees were more direct and spoke negatively about the Tar Pits
- ◆ A less explicit finding is that there are likely some people who are very interested in seeing the Tar Pits, but are simply not interested in learning more or spending time in a museum. These people may be more interested in experiencing the “place” and the “real thing” (the Tar Pits) in an effort to feel some connection to prehistoric life or the past. Or they may know of the Tar Pits as a unique “must-see” destination of Los Angeles and have it on their “list” of things to do.

But they may have no desire to understand the underlying scientific implications of the Tar Pits. These people may never visit the Museum, but they may be willing to pay to have access to the Tar Pits.

- ◆ There are a portion of people who go to Hancock Park regularly for recreational reasons. They may have visited the Museum in the past, but feel no desire to repeat the visit, at least not frequently. While they are likely aware of and somewhat interested in the Tar Pits, these people may visit the park so often that the Tar Pits and Museum no longer feel novel.

Given the above information, alternatives to a Museum visit could include offering a paid guided tour or paid admission to the Observation Pit where visitors could be exposed to more in-depth interpretation and perhaps reconstructed skeletons. A more complete list of recommendations is provided below.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ As pointed out, one of the most obvious reasons for low visitation to the Page Museum is the lack of awareness. The findings in this study suggest that the most effective way to increase awareness of the Page is to take advantage of people's high awareness and interest in the Tar Pits—using the Tar Pits as a hook to draw attention to and incite interest in the Museum. Currently, most people do not realize that there is a Museum in which they can learn more about the Tar Pits. Marketing campaigns should be aimed at clarifying the inextricable link between the Tar Pits and the Page Museum (and these campaigns should be directed at increasing people's awareness *prior* to arriving at the park).
- ◆ Consider ways to attract Tar Pit visitors to the Museum by giving them a taste of what is inside the Museum, specifically the fossils and specimens. Most non-visitors do not gain a true sense of the great number and variety of specimen that have been found in the Tar Pits—rather they only gain awareness of what is obvious and visible in and around the various pits (the smell and size). Consider integrating teaser exhibits that are similar to what is inside the Museum into the areas around the Tar Pits, like the dire wolf skulls or some recreated skeletons. If visitors to the Tar Pits see a dire wolf skull near a Tar Pit and realize they could see more of them and other animals' bones in the Museum, they might feel compelled to visit.
- ◆ As we have learned, a portion of people, both visitors and non-visitors, are disappointed by the Tar Pits once they arrive. They find the pits unappealing because of the make-shift barriers, perceived neglect, lack of staff, and general disrepair. Some of them expect to see bones sticking out of the tar, whether real or re-created, and while the Observation Pit offers this kind of view, it is currently locked. It is not surprising that people who are disappointed by the Tar Pits would be disinterested in visiting the Museum. However, if the Museum was to invest time and resources to improve the areas around the Tar Pits, more non-visitors might be sufficiently intrigued and want to visit the Museum.
- ◆ Even if awareness of the Museum increases, there always may be people who are interested in seeing and experiencing the Tar Pits as a real phenomenon, but not interested enough to visit the Museum (not unlike people who visit a historic site but have no interest in the exhibit in the visitors' center). There is something about getting close to the “real thing”—the actual pits, that can be much more alluring than entering a dark museum. For the people who may never make it into the Museum's doors but are interested in the Tar Pits, consider charging an entrance fee to see the Tar Pits (or at least a fee to go on a tour) and include a visit to the Museum in the fee.



- ◆ In our small sample, no non-visitors stopped at Project 23, which is the best area to learn about the work that scientists are doing. Most non-visitors are focused on seeing a Tar Pit, and Project 23 is not obviously associated with one. Rather Project 23 looks more like a construction site. Even though the Museum has integrated signage into that area, more or different efforts may be necessary. Potentially, Project 23 could be a programming or live demonstration area that visitors could experience for a fee.
- ◆ This study did not delve deeply into visitors' scientific understandings, but results show that many Page visitors and non-visitors have a basic but accurate understanding that scientific evidence can be used to show us how Earth changes over time. This is important to consider in the development of interpretation and exhibits.
- ◆ If the Museum decides to pursue the Ice Age as a primary lens through which to present the Tar Pits, keep in mind that many people have inaccurate and incomplete understandings of the Ice Age. This misconception may be difficult to change given the imprecise name given to the time period.

# INTRODUCTION

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) contracted Randi Korn & Associates, Inc. (RK&A) to conduct audience research for the Page Museum (the Page) and La Brea Tar Pits (Tar Pits) as part of an overall strategy to examine the site's current state and determine plans for its future. RK&A conducted 54 in-depth interviews in May 2014 with people in Hancock Park to understand and compare Page Museum visitors' and non-visitors' perceptions of the Tar Pits and Page Museum; the meaning they construct from their experience that day; and their knowledge of current scientific research happening at the site.

The study objectives are to:

- ◆ Identify the areas of the park, including the pits, signage, and Museum that visitors have visited;
- ◆ Determine visitors' reasons for being in Hancock Park, including their awareness of the Page Museum and Tar Pits;
- ◆ Examine visitors' perceptions (and potential misperceptions) of the Page Museum and Tar Pits;
- ◆ Explore how visitors make meaning from their experience in the park, including the Tar Pits, as well as collection and exhibits in the Museum (if applicable);
- ◆ Determine the extent to which visitors understand that scientists currently work in La Brea Tar Pits and Museum and are conducting ongoing excavation and research, and whether they understand *why* the research continues;
- ◆ Identify questions and curiosities visitors have about the Tar Pits and fossils; and
- ◆ Identify barriers to visitation, understanding, and enjoyment.

## METHODOLOGY

RK&A conducted in-depth interviews with individuals in Hancock Park about the Page and Tar Pits. In-depth interviews encourage interviewees to share their opinions, thoughts, and the meaning they construct using their own thoughts and words as opposed to the thoughts and language of the evaluator or Museum. RK&A designed an interview guide that was approved by staff and pre-tested with visitors (see Appendix A).

RK&A conducted interviews in six locations around Hancock Park (see the sampling plan below for full details). RK&A staff recruited eligible individuals (18 years and older) using a continuous random sampling method. The data collector used a purposeful sampling method to select interviewees, since one of the objectives was to compare responses of Page Museum visitors and non-visitors—to make this determination, the data collector asked screener questions to determine what visitors had done in Hancock Park that day. If the person declined to participate, the data collector logged the person's gender, estimated age, estimated age of visitors in their group, and reason for declining. Once the individual agreed, the data collector conducted the interview, audio-recording the conversation with their permission. The audio-recordings were transcribed to facilitate analysis. At the end of each interview, the interviewees completed a one-page questionnaire that captured demographic and visit information (see Appendix A). A small gift was presented to each visitor group to thank them for participating in the study.

## SAMPLING PLAN

Hancock Park covers a wide area with many entry points. The Tar Pits are located in various spots throughout the Park and the Page Museum is in the Northeast corner. The Los Angeles Museum of Art (LACMA) is in the southwest corner of the park. To ensure we included a representative sample of park visitors overall, we conducted interviews in six locations around Hancock Park—just inside the park at the corner of Wilshire Blvd. and Curson Avenue near the Lake Pit; on the path leading to the parking lot behind the Page Museum; near the park exit on 6<sup>th</sup> Street; near the amphitheater across from Project 23; on the path near Pit 91; and in front of the Observation Pit. These locations were chosen because they are park exits and/or have high foot traffic.

One-third of interviews took place at the Wilshire Blvd. exit from Hancock Park (33 percent) (see the chart below). More than one-fifth took place near Pit 91 (20 percent). Interviews with non-visitors were more likely to take place near Project 23; however, as is reported later, none of the non-visitors actually spent time at Project 23 (meaning they were just passing by).

### DATA COLLECTION BY LOCATION

DATA COLLECTION SITE	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Wilshire Blvd.	33	33	33
Pit 91	27	17	22
Page parking lot	17	13	15
6 <sup>th</sup> Street	10	13	11
Observation Pit	10	13	11
Project 23	3	13	7

## DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING METHOD

Interviewees' responses to interview questions were analyzed qualitatively, meaning that the evaluator studied the data for meaningful patterns and, as patterns and trends emerged, grouped similar responses. The percent of interviewees whose response fell into each pattern/trend was then counted. Findings are reported in descending order starting with the most-frequently occurring.

The data are presented in narrative to describe the rich nuances of patterns and trends. Data are also presented in charts to easily show how prevalent patterns and trends were for visitors and non-visitors. Interviewees' verbatim quotations (edited for clarity) are included to illustrate interviewees' thoughts and ideas as fully as possible. Within the quotations, the interviewer's questions appear in parentheses and an asterisk (\*) signifies the start of a different speaker's comments. Interviewees' genders and ages are included in brackets following quotations.

# PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

## INTRODUCTION

RK&A conducted 54 open-ended interviews over the course of seven days in May 2014 (four weekend days and three weekdays) with visitors to Hancock Park to understand and compare Page Museum visitors' and non-visitors' perceptions of the Tar Pits and Page Museum; their knowledge of current scientific research happening at the site; and the meaning they construct from their experience.

Please note that throughout the report we refer to “visitors”—those who visited the Page Museum and “non-visitors”—those who did not visit the Page Museum. Data from visitors and non-visitors is presented side-by-side in charts along with narrative explanations, and where appropriate, verbatim quotations to illustrate open-ended interview responses. As applicable, we call attention to notable differences between the two samples; however, the sample size is too small to examine the relationship between variables or to test the statistical significance of any differences.

## NON-PARTICIPANTS

Of people who were approached to participate in the study, 117 declined to do so; the participation rate was 46 percent<sup>1</sup>. As shown in the chart below, slightly more than one-half of those who declined to participate were male (57 percent versus 43 percent), similar to the gender of all respondents. Observed age was recorded for each person who declined to participate; one-half were younger than 35 and one-half were older than 35 years, making them slightly younger than all respondents.

### DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-PARTICIPANTS

	NON-PARTICIPANT PERCENT	RESPONDENT PERCENT
<b>GENDER (n = 117)</b>		
Male	57	56
Female	43	44
<b>AGE (IN YEARS) (n = 117)</b>		
18 – 24	9	9
25 – 34	41	34
35 – 44	22	17
45 – 54	20	9
55 – 64	7	15
65 and older	1	15

<sup>1</sup> We do not know if those who declined to participate in the interview had visited the Page Museum since we did not systematically ask non-participants any questions. However based on our own observations and some of their responses, it appears that most who declined to participate had not visited the Museum.

Reasons for declining to participate were recorded, providing some clues as to who the individuals are. Generally, people did not give specific reasons for declining; most gave generic reasons, such as “no thank you” or kept walking. From observations and some more direct responses, we know the following:

- ◆ Many individuals who declined to participate were apparently people in the park to exercise or for recreational reasons (jogging, walking a dog, in “mom and baby” groups, and in soccer teams);
- ◆ Eight declined because they were on their lunch break or were due back at work;
- ◆ Seven declined because they were in the park for soccer, pet adoption, or because they were walking a dog;
- ◆ Three declined because of expiring parking meters; and
- ◆ Two had already completed a survey (a survey was being conducted near the museum entrance May 9-11).

## RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

### GENDER AND AGE

Visitors and non-visitors are similar in terms of gender—slightly more than one-half of interviewees are male (56 percent versus 44 percent). Visitors are older than non-visitors (median age of 45 and 33 respectively).

#### GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS<sup>2</sup>

GENDER	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Male	53	58	56
Female	47	42	44
AGE (IN YEARS)	VISITOR <sup>1</sup> PERCENT	NON-VISITOR <sup>2</sup> PERCENT	TOTAL <sup>3</sup> PERCENT
18 – 24	7	13	9
25 – 34	24	46	34
35 – 44	17	17	17
45 – 54	10	8	9
55 – 64	17	13	15
65 and older	24	4	15

<sup>1</sup>Visitor Age: range = 18 – 70; median age = 45; mean age = 46.8 ( $\pm 16.0$ ).

<sup>2</sup>Non-Visitor Age: range = 22 – 74; median age = 33; mean age = 37.7 ( $\pm 14.1$ ).

<sup>3</sup>Overall Age: range = 18 – 74; median age = 39; mean age = 42.7 ( $\pm 15.7$ ).

<sup>2</sup> In some cases, we talked with small groups of people, but mostly one person per group took the lead in the interview. Data in this table represent the 54 interviewees who predominantly answered interview questions and completed the short demographic form.

## ETHNICITY AND RESIDENCE

More than one-half of interviewees identified as Caucasian/White (59 percent) and one-fifth identified as Hispanic (20 percent) (see the chart below). More than one-third of interviewees are from the Los Angeles area (40 percent). There is no discernible difference in the ethnicity between visitors and non-visitors; however, slightly more non-visitors reported residing outside the United States (17 percent)—this number (4 visitors) is too small to have any bearing on the results.

### ETHNICITY AND RESIDENCE

ETHNICITY <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Caucasian	60	58	59
Hispanic/Latino/Chicano	17	25	20
Asian/Pacific Islander	20	13	17
Other	10	8	9
African American	0	13	6
Native American/Alaska Native	3	4	4

  

RESIDENCE	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
United States (except LA area)	61	38	50
Los Angeles area	36	46	40
Foreign country	4	17	10

<sup>1</sup>Percentages add up to more than 100 because some interviewees identified more than one ethnicity.

## EDUCATION AND MEMBERSHIP

As shown in the chart below, two-thirds of interviewees reported having a college or post-graduate degree (67 percent). Most interviewees are not members of NHMLAC (94 percent). There are no discernible differences between visitors and non-visitors.

### EDUCATION AND MEMBERSHIP

EDUCATION LEVEL	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Some College	36	30	33
College Graduate	39	57	47
Post-Graduate	25	13	20

  

MEMBERSHIP	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Non-Member	97	92	94
Member	3	8	6

## OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW RESPONSES

In this section, we report results from the open-ended interviews. All interviewees, visitors and non-visitors, were asked the same questions (see Appendix A for interview guide). Results from both samples are presented together (side-by-side in charts); differences are noted where appropriate and verbatim quotations are used to illustrate responses.

Results are organized in four sections:

1. Visiting Patterns in Hancock Park
2. Awareness and Understanding of Tar Pits and Museum
3. Awareness and Understanding of Scientific Research associated with the Tar Pits
4. Overall Meaning made from Visit

### I. VISITING PATTERNS IN HANCOCK PARK

#### REASONS FOR VISITING HANCOCK PARK

Interviewees were asked what drew them to Hancock Park that day, with some giving more than one reason (see the chart below). Notably, the most frequent reason named by visitors and non-visitors was the same—to see the Tar Pits (67 percent and 54 percent, respectively). Some had visited the Tar Pits previously and wanted to share the experience with friends (see the quotation below); others had never seen the Tar Pits and wanted to satisfy their curiosity.

We came to see the Tar Pits. . . . I've been to it before, and he hadn't and we had time and [it was] not out of the way, and [we] said, "Let's go do this." [Female 67; Visitor, 6<sup>th</sup> Street]

Other than this one similarity, visitors and non-visitors gave different reasons for visiting the park. For instance, some visitors came to the park to see the Page Museum because it is educational (17 percent) or because of a general interest in natural history (10 percent). On the other hand, non-visitors reported visiting the park to be outside (33 percent), to visit LACMA (25 percent), or because they visit the park regularly (21 percent).

#### REASONS FOR VISITING HANCOCK PARK

REASON FOR VISITING <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
To see Tar Pits	67	54	61
To be outside	0	33	15
To visit LACMA	0	25	11
Museum is educational	17	0	9
Fit time available	17	0	9
Visit regularly	0	21	9
Interest in natural history	10	0	6

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### **AWARENESS OF TAR PITS SIGNAGE IN THE PARK**

As shown below, two-thirds of interviewees reported that they remembered seeing or reading banners and signs in the park. Interestingly, more non-visitors (79 percent) than visitors (53 percent) reported seeing a sign—perhaps non-visitors were more attuned to the signage since they did not have the benefit of learning about the Tar Pits in the Page Museum.

Of those who remembered seeing or reading the banners and signs, most said the signs provided information about the Tar Pits (42 percent), including the name of the Tar Pit, facts about them, and information about animals found in them. Twenty percent said the signs provided directional information. There is very little difference between visitors and non-visitors.

#### **SIGNS AND BANNERS**

<b>REMEMBER SEEING/READING SIGNS AND BANNERS</b>	<b>VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>NON-VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>TOTAL PERCENT</b>
Yes	53	79	65
No	47	21	35

  

<b>INFORMATION PROVIDED<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>NON-VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>TOTAL PERCENT</b>
Information about the Tar Pits	43	42	42
Directional information	25	16	20
Could not recall any information	19	16	17
White boards	19	5	11
Information about asphalt	0	10	6
Information about the Museum	0	10	6

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.



### WHETHER VISITATION IN PARK INCLUDED THE TAR PITS

As show below in the chart, nearly all interviewees, whether visitor or non-visitor, said they visited at least one Tar Pit. Lake Pit was the most visited Tar Pit (56 percent visited it), and Observation Pit was the least visited Tar Pit (10 percent visited it). Just about the same numbers of visitors and non-visitors visited each of the Tar Pits, although no non-visitors stopped at Project 23<sup>3</sup>. Visitors stopped at more tar pits than non-visitors.<sup>4</sup>

#### TAR PIT VISITATION

VISIT A TAR PIT	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Yes	90	96	93
No	10	4	7
TAR PITS VISITED <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Lake Pit	55	57	56
Pit 91	60	35	48
Pits 3 and 4	15	13	14
Project 23	22	0	12
Observation Pit	15	9	10

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

<sup>3</sup> Several non-visitors were intercepted near Project 23 but none of them stopped at that site, indicating they walked past it, perhaps unaware of what it was.

<sup>4</sup> Three of the Museum visitors reported that they had visited the Tar Pits as part of a guided tour.

## 2. AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF TAR PITS AND MUSEUM

### AWARENESS

As shown in the table below, nearly all interviewees were aware of the Tar Pits prior to arriving in Hancock Park (93 percent)—the difference between visitors and non-visitors is negligible. By contrast, only slightly more than one-third of interviewees were aware of the Page Museum prior to their visit to Hancock Park (37 percent)—again the difference between visitors and non-visitors is negligible.

#### AWARENESS OF TAR PITS AND MUSEUM

AWARENESS OF TAR PITS	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Yes	97	88	93
No	3	12	7

  

AWARENESS OF MUSEUM	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
No	60	67	63
Yes	40	33	37

### NON-VISITORS' INTEREST IN VISITING MUSEUM

Non-visitors were asked how their visit in Hancock Park made them feel about visiting the Museum, either that day or in the future. Many, 63 percent, said they were interested in visiting the Museum. When probed further why they did not visit, many reiterated a lack of awareness; others said they did not have time, it was too expensive, the outdoor Tar Pits was his/her only real interest, or they wanted more information about the Museum first.

### DESCRIPTION OF TAR PITS

When asked to describe the Tar Pits, most interviewees gave vague responses; visitors and non-visitors differed slightly in their descriptions (see the chart below). Forty percent of visitors described the Tar Pits using all-encompassing words such as “interesting” (see the first quotation below); 23 percent described physical attributes of the Tar Pits, such as “smelly;” and 23 percent described the way the Tar Pits are different than expected, such as seeing bones sticking out. A few described the Tar Pits negatively (see the second quotation below), and a couple revealed misconceptions in their descriptions, such as that a volcano caused the Tar Pits.

[The Tar Pits are] very unique – [a] unique way of finding out the paleontology kind of situation in our city’s dwelling. [Female 50; Visitor, parking lot]

[The Tar Pits were] kind of a letdown. It’s been built up for me for, like 30 years, so I was expecting a little bit more, but for what it was, it was good. I’d come back to see them. (Can you tell me what you were expecting?) I was expecting a little...bones or something, and a little bit more display, really. But for what there was, it was good. Like I said, I’d come back. I’d recommend people to come see it. [Male 32; Visitor, parking lot]

On the other hand, many non-visitors described the Tar Pits’ physical attributes (“smelly,” “sticky”) (71 percent) (see the quotation below), and one-half used words like “interesting.” More non-visitors than visitors described the Tar Pits negatively (21 percent), saying the pits were “neglected” and “blocked off.” A few non-visitors were confused and did not know how to describe the Tar Pits (8 percent)—these tended to be the people who did not stop at a Tar Pit while in the park.

[The Tar Pits are] a sight to see, just to see the sulfur coming up, to see the tar actually bubble up as well. [Male 34; Non-Visitor, Wilshire]

### DESCRIPTION OF TAR PITS

DESCRIPTION OF TAR PITS <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Physical attributes (e.g., “smelly,” “sticky”)	23	71	43
All-encompassing words (e.g., “interesting,” “unique”)	40	50	41
Negative description	10	21	15
Different than expected	23	0	11
Misconception	7	4	6
Part of Los Angeles history	0	8	4
Unsure	0	8	4

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### UNDERSTANDING OF TAR PITS

All interviewees were asked “what happened in the Tar Pits,” and responses from visitors and non-visitors were noticeably different; more visitors demonstrated an accurate understanding compared to non-visitors (see the chart below). Nearly all visitors (97 percent) but only one-half of non-visitors (50 percent) demonstrated an understanding that animals wandered into the Tar Pits and got trapped by the tar, some going so far as to say the animals were preserved by the tar (see the quotations below). A sizeable portion of non-visitors were either unable to explain what happened in Tar Pits or gave the basic response that bones or fossils were found there (25 percent and 13 percent, respectively).

Animals got stuck there over the years, one way or another and because it was in one area, the number of bones piled up. This operation basically uncovers [the bones], matches them and combines for skeletons from them when available. [Male 47; Visitor, Wilshire]

Animals and whatever plants were here, life got entrapped and couldn't get out and so they perished and they were preserved until you have this fossil record. [Female 67; Visitor, 6<sup>th</sup> Street]

I think that [the Tar Pits] killed a bunch of animals and the tar came up from the ground. [Female 31; Non-Visitor, Wilshire]

### UNDERSTANDING OF TAR PITS

UNDERSTANDING OF TAR PITS <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Animals got trapped	80	50	67
Animals got stuck, died <i>and</i> were preserved	17	8	13
Gas released, causing bubbles	13	13	13
Unable to explain	0	25	11
Fossils or bones found	0	13	6

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### UNDERSTANDING OF THE PAGE MUSEUM

All interviewees were asked what is inside the Page Museum (those who did not visit were asked to speculate). As shown in the chart below, visitors and non-visitors gave very similar responses; most of them understand that the Page Museum houses fossils and bones found in the Tar Pits (92 percent). Most provided other responses as well. For instance, some gave more specific responses and named content areas like anthropology (see the first quotation below) or specific animals like wolves and mammoths.

I guess a lot of them are interested in the scientific history. If you want to be a paleontologist or just a science major, I feel like that's real interesting. [Female 18; Visitor, Wilshire]

The biggest difference between visitors and non-visitors is that some visitors knew that real scientists work inside the Museum while none of the non-visitors indicated knowing this. The quotation below illustrates a firm understanding of the Museum.

[The Museum] was interesting, lots of fossils. It's nice to be able to see the paleontologists working inside the Museum. \*[The Museum is] intriguing and there's tons of dire wolf fossils. In my opinion, there should be more dire wolf skeletons, the whole thing. [Female 30; Visitor, Pit 91]

### UNDERSTANDING OF MUSEUM

UNDERSTANDING <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Houses fossils from Tar Pits	92	92	92
Content area (e.g., paleontology)	30	21	26
Houses animals (e.g., wolves, mammoths)	0	25	11
Scientists work inside	17	0	9
Information about Tar Pits	0	8	4

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### 3. AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ASSOCIATED WITH TAR PITS

#### AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

More visitors than non-visitors were aware of the current scientific research happening at the Tar Pits and in the Museum (77 percent and 58 percent) (see the chart below).

All interviewees were asked what scientists are studying. About one-half of visitors' and non-visitors' responses were similar; 56 percent said the scientists study paleontology, fossils, or bones from the past and in the Tar Pits (see the quotation below). One-third of visitors and non-visitors said vaguely that scientists study animals.

I think they're studying the animal life and plant life from, I guess it's about 10,000 years ago.  
[Male 60; Non-visitor, Wilshire]

When interviewees' descriptions became more specific, differences between visitors and non-visitors surfaced; visitors demonstrated more accurate understandings of the nature of the scientific research compared to non-visitors. For instance, 27 percent of visitors said scientists are studying life in the past (see the quotation below) and 17 percent said scientists are studying plants that have been excavated from the Tar Pits. More non-visitors tended to demonstrate misconceptions and incorrect understandings (38 percent), such as scientists study petroleum, atmospheric conditions, or geology.

[The scientists are studying] fossils: how old they are, how they died, how they lived, what they ate. [Male 40; Visitor, Wilshire]

#### AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

AWARENESS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Yes	77	58	69
No	23	42	31

  

UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Study paleontology, fossils	57	54	56
Study animals	30	33	33
Misconceptions	0	38	16
Study life in the past	27	0	15
Study plants from Tar Pits	17	0	9
Study natural history	13	0	7

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

**UNDERSTANDING THE RELEVANCE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

As shown in the chart below, when asked what scientists’ research can tell us about our world, visitors and non-visitors responses differed slightly. Visitors generally gave more robust responses; most said that the scientists’ research tells us how the Earth has changed and evolved over time (83 percent) while no non-visitors gave this response (see the first quotation below). On the other hand, about 40 percent of visitors and non-visitors alike said that scientists’ research can help us understand what might happen to the Earth in the future and might educate people on impact humans have on the world—they tended to refer to climate change (see the second and third quotations). More non-visitors than visitors gave responses that were overly simplistic, such as that the scientists’ work tells us about extinct animals (33 percent) or the history of Hancock Park (13 percent) (see the fourth quotation).

[The scientists’ work tells us] why the Earth is the way it is right now. Not just as humans, but the way the animals shaped it before we were here. [Female 19; Visitor, parking lot]

[The scientists’ work can tell us about] global warming. It will help us to determine if we are all gonna be in these tar pits someday. [Female 41; Visitor, Observation Pit]

You can see things about the change in environment. I mean, I don’t know what you can tell from finding bones in the tar pits, but I’m assuming that is what [the scientists] are working on. [Male 30; Non-Visitor, Project 23]

[Their work tells us about] different types of animals and mammals found in this area. [Male 28; Non-Visitor, Pit 91]

**WHAT SCIENTISTS’ RESEARCH CAN TELL US ABOUT OUR WORLD**

<b>WHAT SCIENTISTS’ RESEARCH CAN TELL US<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>NON-VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>TOTAL PERCENT</b>
How Earth has changed, evolved over time	83	0	46
Environmental, climate changes, and human impact	37	46	41
About extinct animals	10	33	20
History of Rancho La Brea, creation of Hancock Park	0	13	6
Does not have anything to do with our world	7	0	4
Unsure	0	8	4

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### **UNDERSTANDING SCIENTISTS' WORK IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE ICE AGE**

Interviewees were asked to describe the relationship between the Ice Age and scientists' research, and results are presented in the chart on the next page. Visitors and non-visitors gave very similar and accurate responses. The majority said that the scientists' work can tell us about the conditions present during the Ice Age or that the fossils being studied come from animals that were alive and died around the time of the Ice Age (48 percent and 46 percent, respectively) (see the quotations below). No interviewees gave completely inaccurate responses, although two visitors said they did not know (10 percent).

I guess the creatures that they found here all died at the end of the Ice Age, so they're studying [what happened to animals] the end of the Ice Age. [Male 38; Visitor, Pit 91]

I know that they found a lot from the Pleistocene period in that pit over there, like the mammoths and that kind of thing, so I suppose that might kind of help inform exactly which animals survived the Ice Age and which animals didn't. [Female 27; Non-visitor, 6<sup>th</sup> Street]

Interviewees were also asked what "Ice Age" means to them (results are in the chart on the next page). Visitors' and non-visitors' responses were similar. Nearly one-half of all interviews gave an inaccurate response, that "the Ice Age was a time when the Earth was covered with ice" or "when glaciers covered the majority of the planet" (see the quotations below). A small portion of visitors and non-visitors gave other, more accurate, but simplistic responses, such as that it was a time when temperatures were cooler, "a long time ago," or when different animals were alive (19, 17, and 11 percent respectively). A few interviewees mentioned the animated film series *Ice Age*.

There's a definition of Ice Age where the Earth was mostly covered with ice and they showed a mammoth that [was] living in cold weather, so that would be a way to infer and check the dates; but there were multiple Ice Ages and there's no description here and that's a shame. [Male 47; Visitor, Wilshire]

Ice Age is a time in our history where the Earth was largely covered in ice and a completely different ecosystem of animals lived during that time and it was several million or hundreds of millions of years after the dinosaurs. [Male 28; Visitor, Wilshire]



**UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENTISTS' WORK IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE ICE AGE**

<b>WHAT SCIENTISTS' WORK HAS TO DO WITH THE ICE AGE</b>	<b>VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>NON-VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>TOTAL PERCENT</b>
Provides information about conditions during the Ice Age	50	50	50
Study fossils/animals that lived during the Ice Age	40	50	46
Unclear what research has to do with Ice Age	10	0	6
<b>WHAT ICE AGE MEANS TO VISITORS<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>NON-VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>TOTAL PERCENT</b>
Earth was covered with ice, glaciers	47	46	46
Temperature was cooler	23	13	19
Long time ago	13	21	17
Different animals were alive	20	0	11
Dramatic climate change and mass extinction	10	13	11
Animated film	10	13	11
Age after dinosaurs	10	0	6

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

#### 4. OVERALL MEANING MADE FROM VISIT

##### **MOST FAVORED ASPECT OF VISIT**

Interviewees often named a variety of things that they liked most about their visit (see the chart below). Visitors' and non-visitors' responses were quite different. Most visitors named something in the Museum (50 percent), such as the skeletons and learning new facts (see the first quotation below). And, as shown in the second quotation, 17 percent of visitors said they most liked seeing the scientists work, whether inside or outside (no non-visitors mentioned scientists).

I like the big mammoth. . . . \*It's really great just to see the size of the skeletons and everything I think. You walk in there and it's like—I did a picture [with] her next to the mammoth and that is so cool. [Female 31, Male 32; Visitor, parking lot]

I think my favorite part was the Fishbowl [Lab]. (You liked the Fishbowl?) Actually watching them work and what they actually do to find each fragment of the bones of the animals. [Female 44; Visitor, Parking Lot]

On the other hand, nearly all non-visitors named something in the park (97 percent), including using the grounds for relaxing or eating lunch, seeing the Tar Pits, and the weather.

##### **MOST ENJOYABLE ASPECTS**

<b>MOST ENJOYABLE<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>NON-VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>TOTAL PERCENT</b>
<b>Something in Park</b>			
Using the grounds	10	42	24
Seeing Tar Pits, learning about Tar Pits	17	21	19
Beautiful park atmosphere, weather	7	34	18
<b>Something in the Museum</b>			
Skeletons	23	--	13
Learning history, new facts	13	--	7
Animatronics	7	--	4
Introduction film	7	--	4
<b>Other</b>			
Time with family, friends	10	8	9
Seeing, talking to scientists	17	0	9

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### LEAST FAVORED ASPECT OF VISIT

When asked to name the least favorite part of their visit, visitors and non-visitors gave similar responses (see the chart below). About one-third of all interviewees said nothing was their least favorite. About 20 percent cited some aspect of the Tar Pits as their least favorite, such as that there was not much to see, the smell was bad, the exhibits were closed (like the Observation Pit), and staff were not available (see the first two quotations below). A small portion of interviewees named other undesirable aspects of their visit, including poor exhibits and signage, high costs, and crowding (see the third quotation).

[The least enjoyable part was] not having a lot of things to do outside [aside from] walking the path. [Female 29; Non-Visitor, parking lot]

[My least favorite part] would be the Observation Pit. I expected to go in there, but it was gated up. [Male 40; Visitor, Project 23]

We paid \$9 for parking and they wanted \$9 to see the Museum. If you are paying for [parking], charge a couple of dollars more for parking and then allowing the people to get in [to the Museum] with their parking pass. That would make sense. [Male 63; Non-Visitor, parking lot]

### LEAST ENJOYABLE ASPECTS

LEAST ENJOYABLE <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Not much to see around Tar Pits	10	4	7
Smell of the Tar Pits	7	4	6
Observation Pit was locked	7	0	4
Area around Tar Pits looked messy, neglected	0	4	2
No staff in Tar Pits	3	0	2
Poor quality exhibits and signage	17	4	11
High costs (parking, Museum)	17	17	17
Crowding (too many children, no picnic tables)	7	4	6
Heat	7	0	4
Nothing least favored	25	33	30

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### **MOST COMPELLING OR SURPRISING ASPECT OF VISIT**

When asked what was most compelling or surprising about their visit, interviewees provided a variety of responses. Interestingly, most visitors and non-visitors identified the Tar Pits as most compelling; however, they differed in what they found compelling. Nearly one-half of visitors said the fossils and animals found in the Tar Pits were most compelling (47 percent) (see the quotations below), while more than one-half of non-visitors said the size and appearance of the Tar Pits were most compelling (54 percent), suggesting a lack of understanding of the significance of the Tar Pits.

The sheer number of animals that were trapped in the tar pits. I didn't know that it was in the vicinity of 100,000 animals, I think that's the number that was used, and we're still finding more in these Tar Pits. [Male 28; Visitor, Wilshire]

(What stands out as most compelling or most surprising about your visit today?) Pit 91 . . . and the size of the mammoth. (Can you elaborate a little on what it is you like about Pit 91?) I like the fact that they have the fun facts written, and then you can see the parts where [the scientists] dig and you can see the bones that are coming out of it. [Male 68; Visitor, Observation Pit]

The other things named as most compelling by visitors and non-visitors also differed. For instance, 27 percent of visitors said the most compelling aspect of their visit had to do with seeing scientists working and talking with other scientists; whereas 22 percent of non-visitors named something miscellaneous about being in the park, like the banjo player or the weather.

### **MOST COMPELLING OR SURPRISING ASPECTS**

<b>MOST COMPELLING OR SURPRISING<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>NON-VISITOR PERCENT</b>	<b>TOTAL PERCENT</b>
Appearance/size of Tar Pits	20	54	35
Fossils, animals found in Tar Pits	47	0	26
Seeing scientists work	27	0	15
Aspect of park (not related to Tar Pits)	0	22	10
George Page's story	7	0	4
Nothing surprising/compelling	0	16	4

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### CONFUSING ASPECTS OF VISIT

As shown in the chart below, when asked what, if anything, was confusing or difficult about the visit, more than one-half of all interviewees said nothing (56 percent). The most common complaint named by about one-third of visitors and non-visitors alike was that the informational and directional signage in the park was confusing and non-informative (see the quotation below). Other responses were miscellaneous.

The map is not the easiest in the world to read because there [are] so many different pits and everything [is] all over the place. If they could lay it out a little bit better. . . . If you have a sign that says corresponding numbers to the map and then you can kinda find it that way. [Female 30; Visitor, Pit 91]

### CONFUSING ASPECTS

CONFUSING ASPECTS <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
Nothing was confusing	51	64	56
Navigating park, directional and informational signage about the park	36	24	28
Limited show times for Ice Age Encounters, tours	7	0	4
Only one public restroom	0	8	4

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

### REMAINING QUESTIONS AND CURIOSITIES

As shown in the chart below, one-half of all interviewees said they had no remaining questions or curiosities (50 percent).

Among the other interviewees, more than one-third had questions about the Tar Pits, in particular about the fossils being found or the work scientists are doing. Their curiosities were idiosyncratic, and some examples include wanting more:

- ◆ Information on the number and kind of fossils that have been excavated to date
- ◆ Information about why the work in Pit 91 had stopped for five years
- ◆ Information on where the scientists are going with their research
- ◆ Opportunities to speak with scientists about their work
- ◆ Information on other tar pits in Los Angeles

A few visitors and non-visitors had miscellaneous questions about the Museum, such as how donations support the work being done, where to park, or what it costs to visit the Museum.

#### QUESTIONS AND CURIOSITIES

QUESTIONS AND CURIOSITIES <sup>1</sup>	VISITOR PERCENT	NON-VISITOR PERCENT	TOTAL PERCENT
No questions or curiosities	60	46	54
<b>Tar Pits related</b>			
Information on what has been found, fossils	13	25	20
Scientists work	13	17	15
Other tar pits in Los Angeles	0	8	4
Questions about Museum	7	8	7
Questions about park	7	0	4

<sup>1</sup>Percentages may add up to more than 100 because some interviewees gave multiple responses.

## APPENDIX A

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Removed for proprietary reasons.

