

# Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Oudenbosch

## Abstract

The Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Oudenbosch (Natural History and Ethnographic Museum Oudenbosch) was founded in 1956 from the collection of natural history, archaeological and ethnographic objects of the Brothers of Saint Louis. This congregation opened a boys' boarding school in the village of Oudenbosch in the Dutch province of North Brabant in 1840. The objects that missionaries brought back from their travels to Southeast Asia and Africa were used to teach the boarding school pupils.

## History of the collection

In 1840, the Catholic congregation of the Brothers of St. Aloysius Gonzaga was founded in the village of Oudenbosch in the province of North Brabant. The founders were [Willem Hellemons](#) and Johannes Huybrechts. This fraternity later became known as the Broeders van Oudenbosch (Brothers of Oudenbosch) or the Broeders van Saint Louis (Brothers of Saint Louis), named after the boys' boarding school in Oudenbosch, which was also founded in 1840. The main task of the congregation was therefore to teach the pupils of the boarding school. When the congregation also became active in the Dutch East Indies in 1862, missionaries increasingly brought collections of ethnographic and natural history objects back to Oudenbosch. These collections were used in the boarding school to teach the pupils. Not all of the ethnographic and natural history collections came from the Dutch East Indies, however. Collections of Dutch flora and fauna were also assembled. Through the [Witte Paters](#) (White Fathers), a Catholic society that was mainly active in Central Africa, the boarding school in Oudenbosch received objects from, among other places, what was then Belgian Congo.

The objects that make up the collections in Oudenbosch mainly originate from the various interests of the brothers. This eventually led to the creation of a so-called 'physisch kabinet' (physics cabinet) and 'Indisch museum' (Indies museum). It took until 1956 before the various classrooms with their associated collections were merged into a single museum. In 1968, the museum moved to the building at the Markt where it is still located today. It was only after this move that the museum became accessible to visitors from outside the fraternity. In 1985, the collection was transferred to the Stichting Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum, the current owner of the objects.

Nowadays, the museum's ethnographic exhibition alternates every five years between a focus on the former Dutch East Indies and Africa. The current exhibition focuses on the Witte Paters and their relationship with Oudenbosch.

[image] *Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum in Oudenbosch, 2011* ([G. Lanting](#))

## Provenance research

The collection of the Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Oudenbosch is fully digitally registered, but not available online. To access the registration system and the archive, interested researchers can contact the [museum](#). A small part of the museum

collection can be viewed on the website of [Erfgoed Brabant](#).

## Related Aids

- [Christian mission](#)
- [Museums and collection holding institutions](#)
- [Artis Ethnographic Museum](#)
- [Naturalis Biodiversity Center](#)
- [Wereldmuseum Amsterdam](#)
- [Wereldmuseum Berg en Dal](#)
- [Wereldmuseum Leiden](#)
- [Wereldmuseum Rotterdam](#)
- [Missiemuseum Steyl](#)
- [Volkenkundig Museum 'Gerardus van der Leeuw'](#)

## Primary sources

## Secondary sources

Website:

*Website Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Oudenbosch Website of the Natural History and Ethnographic Museum in Oudenbosch. Under the heading 'history', you can find more information about the history of the museum. The heading 'collections' provides insight into the various sub-collections. <http://www.nvmoudenbosch.nl/en>*

Website:

*Erfgoed Brabant - Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Oudenbosch Collection website of Erfgoed Brabant (in Dutch), displaying a small part of the collection of the Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Oudenbosch. <https://www.brabantserfgoed.nl/page/4523/natuurhistorisch-en-volkenkundig-museum>*

Video:

*De collectie van het Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Short video (in Dutch) in which the chairman of the board of the Natuurhistorisch en Volkenkundig Museum Oudenbosch shows various parts of the museum's collection. <https://museumtv.nl/tentoonstelling/natuurhistorisch-en-volkenkundig-museum-oudenbosch/>*

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