

Museum of Zoology Employs Staff of 13 Curators

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the fourth and last article of a series discussing research in the University's natural science museums.

By SHARON EDWARDS
The University Museum of Zoology, the largest of the four University research museums, employs a staff of 13 curators.

Each of the curators divides his teaching in the zoology department and his own research pro-time between curatorial duties. The Museum is organized in six divisions, four representing vertebrate animals and one each for insects and mollusks.

The Division of Mammals has two curators, Prof. William H. Burt and Emmet T. Hooper.

Makes Studies
Prof. Burt is currently making a very comprehensive study of all North American mammals and is preparing a system of classification for them based on the anatomy of the reproductive system.

Prof. Hooper, whose work is with rodents, particularly squirrels, has concentrated his studies on the fauna of Mexico, from which many groups have spread into the United States.

He does much field work there, studying the geographic distribution of these animals and their local variations. Such studies are necessary to an understanding of their evolutionary history and relationships.

Professors Robert W. Storer and Harrison B. Torndoff are Curators of the Division of Birds.

Takes Trip
Prof. Storer, who is presently on a field trip in Canada, studies the behavior patterns of water birds. Interpretation of breeding habits, for example, throws light on the relationship of various species. Prof. Storer has a grant to work more on this project in South America.

Prof. Torndoff also studies behavior and geographic distribution, working primarily with northern finches. "These finches," Prof. Torndoff explained, "are birds of very great social organization, with a social hierarchy as complex as that of the army."

In addition to his study of their social organization, Prof. Torndoff studies their adaptation to life in



—Daily—Joanne Mazzeo

ENTOMOLOGIST—Richard D. Alexander, Curator of Insects in the Museum of Zoology, studies the records of insect songs from the miles of tape collected on field trips. Alexander works with Thomas E. Moore, also Curator of Insects, in this research project.

cold climates. He is presently working on some fossils from the Raymond R. Hibbard Collection.

Checks Ornithology
The Division of Birds is responsible for keeping up to date on the ornithology of the state. In two months, a newly-compiled distribution check list of Michigan birds will be in print.

Professors Norman E. Hartweg and Charles F. Walker are curators of the Reptiles and Amphibians Division.

Prof. Hartweg, one of the country's leading specialists on turtles, is preparing a monographic revision of the classification of turtles of Mexico and the southwestern United States. His study of geographic distribution shows interrelationships and the past history of the group.

In collaboration with Prof. Burt, he is studying the repopulation of the area of a recent volcanic eruption in Mexico.

Prof. Walker studies certain

groups of Mexican amphibians, both their distribution and local variations. Since such variation is often related to a genetic adjustment to the environment, the nature of the populations he studies has a bearing on present knowledge of organic evolution.

Professors Reeve M. Bailey and Robert R. Miller, Curators of the Division of Fishes, are both specialists on fresh-water fish.

Prof. Bailey, one of the country's leading authorities on minnows and the colorful darters, is preparing a systematic revisionary work on some of these genera.

Prof. Miller, who works with a grant from the National Science Foundation, studies a group of viviparous fish of Mexico.

He has discovered two species each of which has two types of females. One of these female types can give birth to both male and female offspring, but the other type only produces females. There are only three known such all-

female reproducers in the vertebrate animal kingdom.

Early Study
Prof. Miller, whose study of these fish is the first one to be made, believes that they may be an intermediate step in the evolutionary development of a much better-known and widely studied fish species of all females.

His work includes studies of the nature of inheritance and behavior patterns of these fish. He is conducting many cross-breeding experiments.

The Division of Fishes has the largest collection of North American freshwater fish in the world, with regard to the number of specimens. Over three miles of shelves house pickled specimens, and a compact aquarium contains many more live fish.

Because of this distinctive collection, the division performs many services for a variety of agencies and organizations, such as the state conservation department.

Largest Collection
The Division of Insects, with a collection of over five million specimens, is larger than any of the collections but that of fishes, and yet is the only one whose number of specimens is far outshadowed by the number of species extant.

This large collection requires four curators, Profs. Theodore H. Hubbell and Irving J. Cantrall, Richard D. Alexander and Thomas E. Moore.

Prof. Hubbell is concluding a study of a grasshopper with a wide distribution across the United States. He has determined the existence of three species where only one had been thought to exist.

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Prof. Cantrall has been for more than 10 years the curator of the Edwin S. George Reserve, the main outdoor research facility near the University. This position has recently been taken over by Prof. Francis C. Evans, who will henceforth be part of the Museum staff. Both Profs. Cantrall and Evans are ecologists.

Prof. Cantrall's research involves the systematic study of a small, short-winged, flightless grasshopper of wide distribution. Through minute dissections, particularly of the male genital structures, he has discovered the existence of an enormous complex of populations of this species, which has undergone a rapid evolution on the periphery of its range.

Work Together
Alexander, a specialist on katydids and crickets, and Moore, a specialist on cicadas, work together on a study of production of sound.

In their work with 17 year cicadas, they have discovered that two distinct populations exist, superficially alike, but with entirely different songs. These populations live together in assembled hordes, but do not interbreed.

"Insect song acts as an isolating mechanism for the species, a method of congregating individuals of the same species," explained Moore. They have received a grant for work this summer on 13 year cicadas.

Prof. Henry van der Schalie, curator of the Division of Mollusks, is engaged in a study of those snails that may act as host to the larva of a parasite that causes a serious human disease, schistosomiasis.

Prof. van der Schalie also operates the country's only training program for malacologists (study of mollusks).

According to Prof. Hubbell, the Museum of Zoology is one of the three leading university museums in the United States, in terms both of the size and value of its collections and especially of the qualifications and professional standing of its men.

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