

Field Museum of Natural History

Founded by Marshall Field, 1893

Roosevelt Road and Lake Michigan, Chicago

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FIELD MUSEUM NEWS

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Field Museum is open every day of the year during the hours indicated below:

November, December, January	9 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
February, March, April, October	9 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
May, June, July, August, September	9 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Admission is free to Members on all days. Other adults are admitted free on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays; non-members pay 25 cents on other days. Children are admitted free on all days. Students and faculty members of educational institutions are admitted free any day upon presentation of credentials.

The Library of the Museum, containing some 92,000 volumes on natural history subjects, is open for reference daily except Sunday.

Traveling exhibits are circulated in the schools of Chicago by the Museum's Department of the N. W. Harris Public School Extension.

Lectures for school classrooms and assemblies, and special entertainments and lecture tours for children at the Museum, are provided by the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures.

Announcements of courses of free illustrated lectures on science and travel for the public, and special lectures for Members of the Museum, will appear in FIELD MUSEUM NEWS.

There is a cafeteria in the Museum where luncheon is served for visitors. Other rooms are provided for those bringing their lunches.

Members are requested to inform the Museum promptly of changes of address.

EDITORIALS

Vacation time is here. Vacations offer a good opportunity to make those long deferred visits to the Museum which so many people have planned, but put off during the year on account of pressure of business or for other reasons. A day, or part of a day, of your vacation used in visiting the Museum will be well spent. If you have not made such a visit for a year or more, you will find many new exhibits of great interest. Everything has been done to make your visit convenient. There are motor coaches running direct to the entrance of the Museum (the No. 26, Jackson Boulevard line with free transfers to and from all other lines of the Chicago Motor Coach Company). Ample free parking space is available for your own car. The Museum is open from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. during the summer months. There is a cafeteria in the building where luncheons may be obtained.

As a Member of the Museum you are entitled to bring or send your family and friends, who will be admitted free on presentation of your personal card. Take full

advantage of this and the other privileges granted under your membership.

With the schools closing this month, it is gratifying to note that Field Museum's educational work for children has been carried on in full force and with noteworthy results. The Department of the N. W. Harris Public School Extension of Field Museum has again circulated hundreds of traveling exhibition cases among all the public schools, and many parochial and private ones as well, changing the exhibits every two weeks, and reaching approximately 500,000 children over and over again through the school year. The James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures has continued all of its activities—Saturday entertainments for children at the Museum, lecture-tours of the exhibits, extension lectures in the schools before several hundred classrooms and assemblies of pupils, and other work. Its statistics are not available at this time, being compiled on a January to December basis, but it seems safe to predict that its record of reaching more than a quarter of a million children a year will be maintained in 1931. It will soon announce a summer series of entertainments for children.

BARRO COLORADO ISLAND

BY PAUL C. STANDLEY

Associate Curator of the Herbarium

Recently the Department of Botany determined an important collection of plants gathered last winter on Barro Colorado Island, Panama, by Professor C. L. Wilson of Dartmouth College. The most striking feature of the collection was the fact that it contained thirty-two plants never found before on the island, and one, a *Mimosa*, that represents a new species. Three lists of Barro Colorado Island plants have been published at various times by the present writer.

In the North statements regarding the wealth of plants and animals in the tropics often are received with skepticism. Just how rich in animals and plants a tropical island can be is shown by the recently issued seventh annual report of the Barro Colorado Island Laboratory in the Panama Canal Zone.

Field Museum is one of nine institutions supporting the Barro Colorado Biological Laboratory. This laboratory is directed by the Institute for Research in Tropical America, through Dr. Thomas Barbour. The resident custodian of the laboratory, James Zetek, has been the patient counselor and friend of almost every scientist who has visited Panama in recent years.

The Barro Colorado laboratory has become the chief center for research work in natural history in tropical America, and it is visited each year by increasing numbers of scientists from the United States. It is situated on an island of six square miles in Gatun Lake, the shipping of the Panama Canal passing directly before its door.

The island has been set aside as a permanent reservation for the wild life of the region. It is covered with dense forest, composed of an inexhaustible variety of trees, shrubs, ferns, orchids, and other plants, the known species now numbering more than 900 varieties. One of them is the famous dove or Holy Ghost orchid, whose flowers represent perfectly a white dove with outspread wings.

The report lists forty-three mammals from the island, including sloths, armadillos, tapirs, porcupines, squirrels, pumas, ocelots, four kinds of monkeys, and many others. The

report records also thirty-two kinds of frogs and toads, two crocodiles, four turtles, twenty-three lizards, and twenty-five snakes. Although the snakes include some of the most venomous kinds found in America, they seldom are seen by visitors.

From personal experience, the writer can state that the comfortable laboratory on Barro Colorado is an ideal headquarters for field and laboratory work, and that its surroundings, made accessible by well-kept trails, afford a fascinating field for study.

Ancient Installment Buying

Evidence that something similar to the modern plan of "installment buying" may have been in existence in ancient Egypt has been found in a collection of examples of Egyptian writing and writing equipment now on exhibition in Hall J of the Museum. In deciphering a number of inscribed tablets, boards, limestone flakes and potsherds in the collection, Dr. T. George Allen, Assistant Curator of Egyptian Archaeology, came upon one which proved to be a receipt for a series of payments made by a man named Pedikhonsu, in the year 30 of some Ptolemaic or Roman ruler of Egypt. The receipt seemed to imply that Pedikhonsu had purchased something on the installment plan.

Included also in the collection are wooden tags for attachment to mummies in shipment to living relatives, limestone tablets bearing legal documents and prayers, as well as the palettes and pens used by the scribes.

Russian Scientist Visits Museum

Dr. N. I. Vavilov of the Institute of Plant Industry, Leningrad, returning from a tour of Mexico and Central America, recently visited Field Museum. He has in press an important monograph upon cultivated plants, and consulted with the Staff of the Museum to obtain information regarding economic plants of tropical America.

Gifts to the Museum

Following is a list of some of the principal gifts received during the last month:

From Linus Long—2 ceremonial jade axes, Sung and K'ien-lung periods, China; from Ralph M. Chait—a large barrel-shaped pottery wine vessel, Han period, China, and 2 specimens chalcedony geodes containing water, Uruguay; from Frank von Drasek—40 specimens Arkansas minerals; from Joseph Comer—lower jaw of a fossil beaver, Indiana; from R. M. Barnes—a marcasite concretion, Illinois; from Professor C. L. Wilson—131 herbarium specimens, Panama; from William C. Meyer—147 herbarium specimens, British Honduras; from Ralph Hoffman—29 herbarium specimens, Santa Cruz Island; from General Biological Supply House—2 crayfish frogs, Louisiana; from Doctor Charles E. Burt—29 snakes, lizards, frogs and toads, Texas; from Doctor Frank J. Psota—6 damselflies, Mindanao, Philippine Islands.

BEQUESTS AND ENDOWMENTS

Bequests to Field Museum of Natural History may be made in securities, money, books or collections. They may, if desired, take the form of a memorial to a person or cause, named by the giver. For those desiring to make bequests, the following form is suggested:

FORM OF BEQUEST

I do hereby give and bequeath to Field Museum of Natural History of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois,

Cash contributions made within the taxable year to Field Museum not exceeding 15 per cent of the taxpayer's net income are allowable as deductions in computing net income under Article 251 of Regulation 69 relating to the income tax under the Revenue Act of 1926.

Endowments may be made to the Museum with the provision that an annuity be paid to the patron for life. These annuities are tax-free and are guaranteed against fluctuation in amount.



Standley, Paul Carpenter. 1931. "Barro Colorado Island." *Field Museum news* 2(6), 2-2.

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