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## **Department of Reptiles: Annual Report 1889 - 1890**

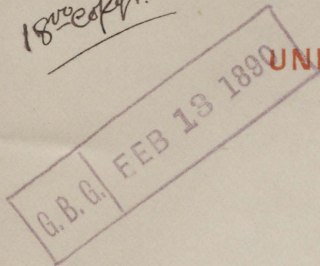
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UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM

UNDER DIRECTION OF

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

WASHINGTON

Curator's reports file  
Reptiles and Batrachians  
Leonhard Stejneger

Jan. 1890

Feb. 12, 1890

Prof. G. Brown Goode,  
Assistant Secretary  
in charge of National Museum

Dear Sir:—

I have the honor to submit  
herewith a report upon the work  
done in the Department of Reptiles  
and Batrachians during the month  
of January, 1890.

Accessions:

During January 90 specimens,  
representing 62 species (Museum  
Registers Nos. 15595 to 15684) have been  
entered. The more important entries are  
as follows:—



J. F. de Barón, San Juan del Norte,  
Nicaragua. — 25 specimens, 19 species, from  
Nicaragua (Gift).

William Taylor, Allapaha, Ga. — 36  
specimens, 28 species, from San Diego, Texas.  
This is part of a very important collection  
received several years ago but never  
entered in the museum register. Among  
the specimens now entered is one of Prof.  
Cope's types of his Hypopachus curvatus,  
as well as two specimens of Sceloporus vari-  
abilis. Some of the snakes are also rare  
in our collection.

The rest of the entries consist chiefly  
in earlier accessions never before entered,  
and in a number of specimens found  
among species with which they were



erroneously identified. Among these are 5 specimens collected by Mr. L. Belding in Cerros Island, Lower California, which have recently been described by the curator as a new species under the name of Cremidophorus labialis.

Minor routine work.

Official letters written	3
" memoranda "	5
Requisitions for supplies	1
Proof corrected, galley's	4
" " , pages	20



Special work accomplished.

The removal of the collection from the room in the West Basement to the new quarters in the South Tower, Smithsonian building, was continued during the month, the installation of the North American lizards being nearly completed. The contents of each jar before placed on the shelves is thoroughly examined, number of specimens noted, and errors corrected. It has very often been found necessary to reidentify the specimens, which in some cases has amounted to a study and revision of the whole genus. Special effort has been made to locate the many specimens collected by the early government exploring



expeditions, a task involving considerable work. This has resulted, however, in the rediscovery of many of the types described by Baird, Girard, Hallowell, and Cope, which were supposed to be lost, as well as in the discovery of a few undescribed species, one of which has already been submitted for publication by the curator.

Papers submitted for publication.

By the curator.

Description of a New Lizard from Lower California. Gpp. Ms. (To editor of "Proceedings" January 29, 1890).

Very respectfully  
 Leonhard Stejneger  
 Curator Dept. Rept. & Patr.



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UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM

UNDER DIRECTION OF

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

WASHINGTON

L. B. G. MAR 15 1890  
March 12, 1890

Prof. J. Brown Goode,  
Assistant Secretary  
in charge U.S. National Museum.

Dear Sir:—

I have the honor to submit  
herewith a report upon the work  
done in the Department of Reptiles  
and Batrachians during the month  
of February, 1890.

Accessions.

During February 102 specimens,  
representing 40 species (Museum Register  
Nos. 15685 to 15786 inclusive) have been entered.  
The more important entries are as follows:—



Capt. W. L. Carpenter, U.S. A., Fort Whipple, Ariz. - 29 specimens, 15 species, from Prescott and Fort Verde, Arizona. An interesting collection well preserved (Gift).

Herbert Brown, Tucson, Ariz. - One specimen of snake which the curator has described as a new species and genus. One of the most distinct and remarkable novelties of late years (Gift).

Geo. P. Merrill, Curator, U.S. Nat. Mus., Washington D.C. - Two specimens of an Alligator-lizard, from the Yellowstone National Park (Gift).

L. Stejneger, Curator, U.S. Nat. Mus., Washington D.C. - 67 specimens, 18 species, from various localities in Arizona and



3

Texas, forming the herpetological results of his collecting trip during the autumn of 1889. The collection contains several interesting and rare species, among which four specimens of Sceloporus jarrovi from the Huachuca mountains, Arizona.

Specimens distributed.

During February 12 specimens, representing 5 species, have been distributed as follows:

a. Presented.

Dr. H. K. Cuning, R. University, Berlin, Germany. — 4 specimens, 4 species, Batrachians from North America.

Prof. R. Widersheim, Freiburg i/B., Germany. — 6 specimens, 2 species, Batrachians from



4

North America.

b. Transferred

to Department of Comparative Anatomy,  
U.S. Nat. Mus. - Two specimens of Tertudo,  
from the Galapagos Islands.

Packages sent out.

a.

(1) Dr. H. K. Conring, Berlin, Germany.  
Batrachians presented by Smithsonian  
Institution.

(2) Prof. R. Wiedersheim, Freiburg i/B.,  
Germany. - Batrachians presented by  
Smithsonian Institution.

b. Delivered personally.

(1) F. A. Lucas for Dept. Comp. Anat., U.S. Nat.  
Mus. - Two specimens of Tertudo, transferred.



Minor routine work.

Official letters written . . . . .	6
" memoranda " . . . . .	13
Requisitions for supplies . . . . .	3
" " work " . . . . .	1
Memoranda of packing " . . . . .	2
Invoices (triplicates) . . . . .	7
Monthly report for January - pages	5

Special work accomplished.

The installation of the reserve series of North American lizards on the shelves in the top room of the South Tower, Smithsonian Institution, was completed during the month. The total number of identified North American lizards of the reserve series was at the end



of the month 2752. The corresponding number enumerated in Dr. Yarrow's catalogue (Bulletin U. S. Nat. Mus., No 24) is 2110.

Among the reptiles brought home by the curator from his collecting trip in the West was a very curious snake collected by Mr. Herbert Brown, near Tucson, Arizona, which upon careful examination was found to belong to a very distinct new species. It has even been deemed necessary to establish for it a new genus, to which a Lower Californian species, previously described by Prof. Cope, is now also referred. The type of the latter has been borrowed from the Philadelphia Academy



of Natural Sciences for comparison.

Elaborate descriptions of both have been prepared, as well as drawings of the forms, for a paper in the "Proceedings".

Respectfully,

Leonhard Stejneger,

Curator, Dept. Rept. & Bot.



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Ack'd  
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March. Stejneger. 1

UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM

UNDER DIRECTION OF

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

G. B. G. APR 19 1890

WASHINGTON April 12, 1890

Prof. J. Brown Goode,  
Assistant Secretary  
in charge U.S. National Museum.

Dear Sir:—

I have the honor to submit herewith  
a report upon the work done in the Depart-  
ment of Reptiles and Batrachians during  
the month of March 1890.

Accessions.

During March 75 specimens,  
representing 26 species (Museum Register  
Nos. 15787 to 15861 inclusive) have been  
entered. The more important entries  
are as follows:—



Herbert Brown, Tucson, Arizona.

One gecko, Coleonyx variegatus, and three snakes, Chilomeniscus ephippicus, both species rare in collections (Gift).

A. G. Smith jr., Denver, Colorado.

6 specimens, 6 species, batrachians and reptiles, from Denver (Exchange).

U. S. Department of Agriculture,

through Dr. C. Hart Merriam. - 64 specimens, 17 species of reptiles, nearly all collected by Dr. Merriam during his collecting trip to Arizona last year. The collection is one of unusual interest and importance, not only on account of the exactness as to precise locality, including altitude, with which each specimen is labelled, but also on account of the many rare and



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new forms which it contains. Moreover, when in the field with Dr. Merriam, the curator was enabled to make extended notes upon the fresh specimens including descriptions of ~~colors~~ and water color sketches of colors, etc., of many of the specimens in this collection. (Gift).

Specimens distributed.

During March 7 specimens, representing 5 species, have been distributed as follows:—

a. Lent for examination.

H. W. Henshaw, Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, D.C. — Three heads of rattlesnakes, from Florida.

b. Transferred to

Department of Comparative Anatomy, U.S. National Museum. — Four specimens, four



species of turtles, to be made into skeletons.

Packages sent out.

a. By express.

(1) Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadel-  
phia, Pa. - Type specimen of Phimothyra  
decurtata returned to owner (Paid).

b. Delivered personally.

(1) F. A. Lucas, for Department of Comparat.  
Anatomy, U.S. National Museum - Four  
specimens of turtles, transferred.

(2) H. W. Henshaw, Bureau of Ethnology -  
Three heads of rattlesnakes, for examination.

Minor routine work.

Official letters written . . . . . 5  
" memoranda " . . . . . 15



Memoranda of packing written . . . 1

Invoices . . . . . 2

Monthly report for February . 7 pages.

Special Work Accomplished.

During the month the reserve series of North American turtles was removed from the basement to the present quarters of the department, and the removal of the snakes of the same series commenced.

According to an expressed desire of Dr. C. Hart Merriam, U. S. Department of Agriculture, to have the reptiles collected by him during his tour in Arizona last year properly identified as soon as possible, the curator undertook to work up the



collection, a task which occupied most of his time during the month and is not yet quite finished. In most instances it was found necessary to review the entire genus to which the specimens collected by Dr. Merriam belong resulting in unravelling considerable confusion in these genera, as well as in the unexpected discovery of several new forms both in this collection and in the old collection of the museum. A full report upon this work will be submitted later.

Dr. G. Baur, formerly of Yale College, during the month commenced a study of the North American chelonians in the collection of the museum. The curator has furnished him desk room and



working facilities in the office of the department, and as much of his own time as could be spared from his other duties.

Papers submitted for publication.

By the Curator.

(1) On a New Genus and Species of Colubrine Snake from North America. 11 pp. MS. + 3 figures (To Editor of "Proceedings" March 12).

[Phyllorhynchus browni n.g. & sp.]

Respectfully

Leonhard Stejneger

Curator, Department, Rept. & Batr.



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UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM

UNDER DIRECTION OF

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

WASHINGTON

May 9, 1890.

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Prof. J. Brown Goode,  
Assistant Secretary  
in charge of U.S. National Museum.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to submit  
herewith a report upon the work done in  
the Department of Reptiles and Batrachians  
during the month of April, 1890.

Accessions:

During April 80 specimens, representing  
21 species (Museum Register Nos. 15862 to  
15941 inclusive) have been entered. The more  
important entries are as follows:-



Herbert Brown, Tucson, Arizona.

A specimen of Scink (Cumeces obsoletus),  
from Tucson. (Gift).

E. O. Matthews, St. Louis, Mo. - A  
specimen of Rattlesnake. (Crotalus  
horridus) from Indian Territory. (Gift).

Julius Hurter, St. Louis, Mo. - 6  
specimens, 5 species, snakes and ba-  
trachians, from St. Louis. (Gift).

U. S. Fish Commission, Washington, D. C.  
69 specimens, 12 species, mostly collected  
by Mr. Chas. H. Townsend during the  
exploration of the Gulf of California  
and adjacent waters, in 1889, by the Fish  
Commission S. S. "Albatross". The collection  
is very interesting and valuable, containing  
among other species, a series of Uta



auriculata from Socorro Island, Revilla  
 Gigedo group, the type of which was  
 hitherto the only specimen known to  
 exist in collections, as well as several  
 specimens of a new species, Uta  
clarionensis from Clarion Island, same  
 group. Mr. Townsend has submitted a  
 special report upon this collection, which  
 is to appear in the "Proceedings" of the  
 museum. (Gift).

Specimens distributed.

During April 7 specimens, representing  
 7 species, have been distributed as follows:—

a. Transferred to

Department of Comparative Anatomy, U.S.  
Nat. Mus.— 7 specimens, 7 species of turtles



to be made into skeletons.

Minor routine work.

Official letters written . . . . .	6
.. memoranda .. . . . .	3
Invoices .. . . . .	1
Monthly report for March .. . . .	7 pages
Proof corrected . . . . .	1 galley.

Papers submitted for publication.

By the Curator.

On the Snakes of the Genus Charina.  
24 pp. MS (To Editor of 'Proceedings' April 23).

Special Work Accomplished.

The determination of Dr. Merriam's  
San Francisco Mt. collection; referred to in last



month's report, was concluded during April, and that of the extensive collections presented by the U.S. Fish Commission commenced. In addition to this work the Curator finished his examination of the booid snakes belonging to the genus Charina; the results of which are embodied in a paper handed to the Editor of the "Proceedings" for publication. He also finished a paper on the North American species of the lacertilian genus Barissia, with description of a new species, B. levicollis, the type of which is in the museum collection. The paper will be submitted during May.

Owing to the expressed desire of Professor E. D. Cope to work on his forth-



coming volume on the North American  
snakes in some other room than those  
now occupied by the Reptile Department,  
and to have the collection of snakes  
moved to his room as soon as he is  
ready to commence the work, it was  
deemed best to discontinue the moving  
of it from the basement to the top room  
in the South Tower.

Respectfully  
Leonhard Stejneger,  
Curator Dept. Rept. & Batr.



E

UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM

G. B. G.

JUN 11 1890

UNDER DIRECTION OF

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

WASHINGTON

June 9, 1890

Prof. G. Brown Goode,  
Assistant Secretary  
in charge of U. S. National Museum.

Dear Sir: -

I have the honor to submit herewith  
a report upon the work done in the Depart-  
ment of Reptiles and Batrachians during  
the month of May, 1890:

Accessions.

During May 80 specimens, re-  
presenting 35 species (Museum Register  
Nos. 15942 to 16021 inclusive) have been  
entered. The more important entries are  
as follows: -



U.S. Fish Commission. - 58 specimens,  
 27 species, partly collected by a party  
 from the S.S. "Albatross" exploring the River  
 Gila, Southern Arizona (1889) and partly  
 by Prof. David S. Jordan and his assistants  
 in the mountains of Virginia and North  
 Carolina during the summer of 1888. The  
 latter collection is particularly rich in  
 turtles, while the first mentioned one  
 contains many interesting species. Among  
 the latter is a specimen of Stenostoma  
humile new to the fauna of Arizona (Gift).

Elwin F. Tarr, Mc Cartty's, Valencia Co.,  
 N. M. - One pair of Horned Toads (Phryno-  
soma hernandezii) from New Mexico (Gift).

Dr. R. W. Shufeldt, U.S.A., Takoma D.C.

Three specimens of a skink (Eumeces)



from Ft. Wingate, N. M. (Gift).

U.S. Department of Agriculture, through  
Dr. C. Hart Merriam. - One Horned Toad  
(Phrynosoma brevirostre) collected at  
Bridger's Pass, Wyoming, by Vernon O.  
Bailey, accompanied by sample of the  
soil upon which the animal was  
found (Gift).

Wm. Palmer, U.S. National Museum. -  
One lizard (Gerrhonotus) from San  
Francisco, Cal. (Gift).

Specimens distributed.

During May 1 specimen has been  
distributed as follows: -

Lent for examination.

F. A. Lucas, U.S. National Museum. - One



Moccasin Snake (Aghistrodon contortrix),  
from North America.

Minor routine work.

Official letters written . . . . .	1
" memoranda . . . . .	10
Requisitions for supplies (house) . . . . .	1
" " " (outside) . . . . .	2
Invoices . . . . .	1
Monthly report for April . . . . .	pages 6

Special Work Accomplished.

The large collection received from the U.S. Fish Commission and entered during the last two months has necessitated special research for the proper identification of many species.



Various lots of older collections which were never entered before, or which had been entirely neglected were also taken up. As a result the curator was fortunate enough to rediscover Hallowell's type of Sceloporus delicatissimus, thus being enabled to assign this hitherto obscure species to its proper place in the system. He also found a new species of Uta collected by Dr. Edw. Palmer in the Island San Pietro Martir, Gulf of California, which he has named Uta palmeri.

Papers submitted for publication.

By the Curator.

On the North American Lizards of the



Genus Barissia of Gray. 9 pp. MS  
(To Editor of "Proceedings" May 1).

[Barissia levicollis sp. nov.]

Respectfully  
Leonhard Stejneger  
Curator Dept. Rept. & Patr.



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UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM

UNDER DIRECTION OF

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

WASHINGTON

A. B. G.

JUL 9 1890

July 7, 1890.

Prof. G. Brown Goode,  
Assistant Secretary  
in charge of U.S. National Museum.

Dear Sir:—

I have the honor to submit herewith  
a report upon the work done in the  
Department of Reptiles and Batrachians  
during the month of June 1890.

Accessions.

During June 267 specimens, representing  
74 species (Museum Register Nos. 16022 -  
16288 inclusive) have been entered. The more  
important entries are as follows:—



✓ Dr. W. Thompson, San Bernardino, Cal. -

One Aniella pulchra, from San Bernardino (Gift).

✓ Dr. W. L. Abbott, Zanzibar, East Africa. -

4 specimens, 4 species, from East Africa, among which the skin of a large crocodile (Gift).

✓ U.S. Eclipse Expedition to West Africa, 1889 -

79 specimens, 27 species, from various points in Western Africa. A special report upon this collection is in preparation (Gift).

✓ Government of Nicaragua, C. A. - 39

specimens, 12 species, presumably from Nicaragua (Gift).

✓ Prof. O. B. Johnson, State University,

Seattle, Wash. - 34 specimens, 8 species, chiefly from Seattle. A very interesting



collection containing, among others,  
 fine series of Charina plumbea and  
Gerrhonotus principis (Gift).

U. S. Department of Agriculture, through  
Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Washington D. C. - 21  
 specimens, 7 species, mostly batrachians  
 from the neighborhood of San Francisco  
 Mountain, Arizona. This collection is  
 particularly interesting for the exactness  
 with which the localities are given, including  
 the altitude. The curator has reported separately  
 on this collection (Gift).

Prof. A. Dugis, Guanajuato, Mexico. -  
 17 specimens, 4 species, of batrachians from  
 Guanajuato, among which a series of  
 the rare Spea multiplicata (Gift).

Rev. Geo. H. P. Fisk, Capetown, South



Africa - 10 specimens, 7 species. These formed part of a collection of live turtles and chameleons presented by Rev. Fisk to the National Museum through the naturalists of the U.S. Eclipse Expedition. This collection was particularly interesting since it contained specimens of the three species of the genus Hornopus, which inhabit South Africa, one of which has only recently been described from types furnished by Rev. Fisk. A number of these died during the voyage and a few after their arrival to Washington, while those still alive are cared for by the Department of Live Animals (the U.S. Zoological Park). Unfortunately, the specimens which died are in a very



bad state of preservation, some of them being absolutely rotten from lack of due care (Gift).

Dr. Joseph L. Hancock, Chicago, Ill. —  
A live Boa imperator brought to Chicago from Apinwall with a freight of bananas. It has been turned over to the superintendent of the U.S. Zoological Park (Gift).

Minor routine work.

Official letters written	1
" memoranda "	6
Monthly report for May	pages 6
Proof corrected	galley 8



Special work accomplished.

During June the curator identified and made a detailed report upon the batrachians collected by Dr. C. Hart Merriam, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and his party during the summer of 1889 on and near the San Francisco Mountain, Arizona.

The greater part of his time, however, was occupied with a preliminary report upon the herpetological collections brought home by the naturalists of the U.S. Eclipse Expedition to West Africa, 1889. The literature on African reptiles and batrachians is widely scattered in various periodicals difficult of access, while



many of the standard general works are not to be found in the libraries of Washington. With no material for comparison the task of identifying an African collection of this kind is both difficult and one requiring time and patience, while in this particular instance it was rendered the more difficult because the preservation of the specimens, on the whole, is very unsatisfactory. Still more annoying was the fact that quite a number of the specimens are without indication of the locality where collected.

Papers submitted for publication.

By the Curator.

Annotated List of the Reptiles and



Batrachians collected in the Summer of 1889 by Dr. C. Hart Merriam on the San Francisco Mountain Plateau and the Desert of the Little Colorado in Arizona, with Descriptions of New Species. - 54 pp. Ms. with one plate and one map (To Dr. Merriam June 2 and 21).

[Crotaphytus baileyi; Crotaphytus silus; Uta palmeri; Uta lewis; Sceloporus elongatus, sp. nm.; Types in National Museum].

Respectfully  
 Leonhard Stejneger,  
 Curator Dept. Rept. & Batr.



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Entered.

Curator's Reports  
File 1890.

UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM ✓

UNDER DIRECTION OF

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

WASHINGTON

September 1, 1890

Prof. J. Brown Goode,  
Assistant Secretary  
in charge of National Museum.

Dear Sir: -

In compliance with your letter  
of July 1<sup>st</sup> 1890, I have the honor to  
submit herewith a report upon the  
operations of the Department of Reptiles  
and Batrachians for the year ending  
June 30, 1890.

Respectfully  
Leonhard Stejneger  
Curator Dept. Rept. & Batr.



Report on the Department of  
Reptiles and Batrachians in  
the U.S. National Museum, 1890  
By Leonard Stejneger, Curator.

The reorganization of the department and overhauling of the reptile collection begun during the year 1888-1889 has been continued with an interval of three months, during which the curator was absent on a collecting trip in the west and the daily routine work of the department consequently suspended. As the curator was without an assistant most of the time, the work has of necessity been of slow progress, the more so since the collection had to be moved into new quarters. However, as these are commodious and healthy, the future work of the depart-



ment may be expected to progress more rapidly.

The removal into the new quarters of the North American lizards and their installation on the shelves were completed during the year and this part of the collection catalogued and counted. The total number of the identified specimens of the reserve series of North American lizards was 2752. Several genera had to be worked up monographically in order to settle many intricate points of identification and nomenclature, while in others the arrangement is only provisional until the whole subject can be investigated.



During the year quite a number of interesting collections were received, the total number entered being 705<sup>\*</sup> ✓

Foremost in importance among these is the collection of reptiles and batrachians made by Dr. C. Hart Merriam and his assistants during the summer of 1889 while engaged in an exploration of the fauna and flora of the San Francisco Mountain plateau, Arizona, being part of the general biologic survey of the country undertaken by

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\* ✓ The number entered in 1888-1889 was 784; in 1887-1888, 19; in 1886-1887, 138.



the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The curator has already reported in detail upon this collection and the report is now going through the press.

The U. S. Fish Commission, as usual, has added materially to the collections of this department, the contribution this year being 128 specimens collected partly by the naturalists attached to the S. S. "Albatross", partly by Prof. D. S. Jordan and his assistants. The "Albatross" collections were made chiefly in the islands off the coast of Lower California. They contain many rare species, and Mr. Chas. H. Townsend, resident naturalist of the "Albatross", has made a special report



upon them, which will soon be published.

Quite a number of specimens were received from the naturalists attached to the U.S. Eclipse Expedition to West Africa, 1889. This collection was not in a very satisfactory state of preservation, and from the fact that the collections were made under apparently unfavorable circumstances in localities already more or less explored they could hardly be expected to contain many novelties.

Among the many other contributors the following deserve special mention: Herbert Brown, Tucson, Arizona; J. H. Ragsdale, Cook Co., Texas; J. F. LeBaron, San Juan, Nicaragua; Capt. W. L. Carpenter,



U.S.A., Ft. Whipple, Arizona; Julius  
Murter, St. Louis, Mo.; Dr. W.L. Abbott,  
Zanzibar, East Africa; Prof. O.B. Johnson,  
Seattle, Wash.

During a three months trip to  
Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, the  
curator collected a number of reptiles,  
chiefly lizards, besides birds and  
mammals. In spite of the lateness of  
the season - September to November - an  
interesting material was brought home,  
which, when fully worked up, will add  
considerably to our knowledge of the  
geographical distribution of the  
western species.



In addition to the ordinary routine work consisting in caring for, registering, identifying, and labelling the new accessions, much time has been spent in correcting and verifying the records of the collections already at hand. Moving the collection from the old quarters in the basement to the new ones in the top rooms of the south tower, Smithsonian Institution, has also consumed considerable time, as the opportunity was improved of recataloguing the collection as the jars were placed in the new cases.

This work is not yet completed, and the collection of North American snakes



will not be removed until Prof. Cope shall have examined them, which I understand he is to do before the end of the present year.

A great improvement in the storing of the specimens has been effected during the year. In the former quarters of the department in the basement of the Smithsonian Institution, the jars were placed on wide stationary shelves in rows often twenty jars deep, which made it impossible to lay hand on those behind the first two or three rows without disturbing them all. The new quarters, however, have been fitted out with unit cases which take the standard



museum drawers.

The new accessions have not been distributed between the "reserve series" and the "general series" for the reason that such a division of the material can only be done when the whole collection has been worked up. The status of the North American herpetology at the present date is so unsettled that in most cases it is impossible to tell whether a specimen is a duplicate, or whether it may not be of extreme importance when the matter is going to be thoroughly investigated. It seems probable that in a near future new views and new methods



in the treatment of the geographic distribution and the systematic technicalities are going to be tested, and such a separation as alluded to must therefore now be regarded as premature and unwise. It has, consequently, also been deemed inexpedient to make too great inroads on the so-called duplicates of the "general series" for distribution, as it is extremely probable that it contains some very valuable material which should not be disposed of until utilized.

It was expected that Prof. E. D. Cope would have spent some time in working up the series of North American



reptiles, but he has done no work in the department. However, the collection made by the naturalists of the U. S. Fish Commission steamer "Albatross" during her cruise round Cape Horn was identified by him and reported upon, but the material has not been returned as yet.

Dr. G. Baur, late of Yale College, was given an opportunity to work up the collection of Chelonians with special reference to the North American species. He left Washington, however, before the task was completed.

The curator during the year made special researches into the geographic



distribution of the reptiles and batrachians of the southwestern territories of the United States. A few of the results of these studies are embodied in the report he made upon the collections brought home by Dr. C. Hart Merriam from the San Francisco Mountain plateau, Arizona. He has also submitted for publication in the "Proceedings" of the museum several minor papers describing a number of new species as well as a new genus of North American snakes (Phyllorhynchus browni, n.g. & sp.), besides a more extensive memoir treating of the individual



variation in the genus Charina.

The assistant formerly connected with the department, Mr. E. Rhum, resigned his position in the early part of the year, and the curator has since performed all the various duties without any aid save that of some laborers in carrying the jars from the basement to the present office. As a result it has been impossible to institute a detailed count of the collection, and like that of the previous annual report, the following estimate of the number of specimens is based upon that of last year by adding the number of entries catalogued during the



present year and deducting those which have been disposed of in exchange or transferred to the department of Comparative anatomy. According to this estimate the status of the collection on June 30, 1890, would be as follows:

Reserve series . . . . . 13979 specimens;

Duplicate series . . . . . 8758 specimens;

Unsorted and extras 6313 specimens.

Grand total 29050 specimens.

Last catalogue entry in June, 1889, was 15523; that of June, 1890, 16228