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Field Book Project Releases Previously Unpublished Scientific Records Documenting Biological Specimen Online

The Field Book Project is pleased to announce that detailed catalog records describing [thousands of Smithsonian field books are now available online](#) through the Smithsonian's Collection Search Center. The launch of these scientific records which document the collection of biological specimens represents the first time they have been publicly available. These records describe 6,679 field books comprising 542 collections housed at the Smithsonian Institution.

In addition to the detailed catalog records, researchers now have access to 927 authority files providing biographical and historical details for the persons, organizations, and expeditions involved in the creation of these field books. The database allows researchers to explore the relationships between expedition members, lifelong collaborators, and institutional affiliations. A subset of these records includes digital images of field books for viewing alongside the records.

Field books provide rich data for researchers to understand how biodiversity has changed over time and space. They enhance information associated with specimens by providing details regarding dates, localities, and associated event data.

About the Field Book Project

The Field Book Project was initiated in 2010 by the Department of Botany, National Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian Institution Archives to create one online location for primary source field books related to scientific research. Starting at the Smithsonian, the Field Book Project is cataloging, conserving, and digitally imaging the materials to make them available to researchers. Future project goals include expanding the Registry to include field books records from other museums and research centers around the world, and developing features to facilitate interaction with other biodiversity collection resources.

The Field Book project is made possible by the Hidden Collections grant administered by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR). The project received additional funds in 2011 from Save America's Treasures to support physical conservation of the field books and the Smithsonian Women's Committee to support conservation and digitization.