



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Asa Fitch Notebooks, circa 1827-1872

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Asa Fitch Notebooks
Identifier:	Record Unit 7124
Date:	circa 1827-1872
Extent:	1 cu. ft. (2 document box)
Creator:::	Fitch, Asa, 1809-1879
Language:	Language of Materials: English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7124, Asa Fitch Notebooks

Historical Note

Asa Fitch (1809-1879), the founder of economic entomology in America, was trained in medicine, which he practiced briefly. Fitch was largely self-taught in entomology. In 1838 he abandoned his medical practice and devoted himself to entomological studies, to such good effect that in 1854 he was appointed State Entomologist of New York. His appointment marked the first serious attention to be paid to insect damage in the United States. Fitch's studies, largely confined to New York, were extremely thorough and made a great impression on Charles Valentine Riley and other members of the generation of entomologists to follow Fitch.

Introduction

This finding aid was digitized with funds generously provided by the Smithsonian Institution Women's Committee.

Descriptive Entry

This collection consists of five volumes of notes of observations, some rearing data, and information copied from other sources and researchers; a few illustrations; and some notes and marginalia by later users of the notebooks. The notebooks are arranged roughly by orders and families of insects; species are usually described separately, with dates of observation, anatomy, coloration, and habitats given. Dates of observation often vary widely within each volume, most often ranging between 1830 and 1860. Some

specimens were supplied by correspondents. There are also occasional notes on practical remedies for insect pests.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Entomologists
Entomology
Insect pests

Types of Materials:

Field notes

Names:

Fitch, Asa, 1809-1879
Riley, Charles V. (Charles Valentine), 1843-1895

Container Listing

Box 1

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Box 1 of 2 | Volume 1 Order: Hymenoptera; Families: Ichneumonidae, Siricidae, Cynipidae |
| Box 1 of 2 | Volume 2 Order: Hymenoptera; Family: Cynipidae |
| Box 1 of 2 | Volume 3 Order: Mecoptera; Family: Ephimeroptera |
| Box 1 of 2 | Volume 4 Order: Homoptera; Family: Coccidae |
| Box 1 of 2 | Volume 5 Order: Homoptera; Family: Psyllidae |

Box 2

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Box 2 of 2 | Volume 6 Drawings of insects attributed to Fitch; mostly in color |
| Box 2 of 2 | Volume 7 Identifications of certain drawings appearing in Volume 6; not by Fitch |