



# Smithsonian

*Institution Archives*

Elliott Coues Papers, 1872-1880,  
1896-1899 and undated

Finding aid prepared by Smithsonian Institution Archives

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
<b>Title:</b>	Elliott Coues Papers
<b>Date:</b>	1872-1880, 1896-1899 and undated
<b>Identifier:</b>	Record Unit 7344
<b>Creator::</b>	Coues, Elliott, 1842-1899
<b>Extent:</b>	0.5 cu. ft. (1 document box)
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7344, Elliott Coues Papers

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## Historical Note

Elliott Coues (1842-1899), a disciple of Spencer F. Baird, was probably the most influential American ornithologist of his generation. From about 1860 to 1881 Coues served in the United States Army as Assistant Surgeon and from 1877 to 1886 served as Professor of Anatomy at Columbian College (now The George Washington University). His major publications include *Key to North American Birds*, 1872; *Check List of North American Birds*, 1873, 1882; and *Field Ornithology*, 1874.

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## Introduction

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

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## Descriptive Entry

These papers consist of a "Book of Dates" compiled by Coues between 1896 and 1899, probably when he was preparing to write his memoirs. It includes genealogical information dating to 1686 and is probably the most important source of information on Coues' life. Also included are thirty-eight letters written by Coues to Winfrid Alden Stearns, who was seeking Coues' help in writing a manual of New England ornithology. Stearns' work was finally published in 1883 in two volumes under the title *New England Bird Life, Being a Manual of New England Ornithology*, with extensive revisions and editing by Coues. In addition, this record unit contains an undated manuscript written by Coues on the geographic distribution of mammals.

## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

Mammalogy  
Ornithology

### Types of Materials:

Books  
Manuscripts

### Names:

Baird, Spencer Fullerton, 1823-1887  
Columbian College in the District of Columbia  
Coues, Elliott, 1842-1899  
George Washington University  
Stearns, Winfrid Alden, 1852-1909  
United States. Army

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## Container Listing

Box 1	
Box 1 of 1	"Book of Dates"
Box 1 of 1	Coues - Winfrid Alden Stearns Correspondence
Box 1 of 1	Manuscript on Geographic Distribution of Mammals, undated
Box 1 of 1	Miscellaneous
Box 1 of 1	Correspondence, Coues to George Newbold Lawrence, April 20, 1864 (Accession 01-162)
Box 1 of 1	Manuscript, " History of North American Mammals," undated (Accession 06-119)