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Collection Overview

Repository: Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title: Roman Kenk Papers
Identifier: Record Unit 7383
Date: circa 1921-1987
Extent: 3.5 cu. ft. (3 record storage boxes) (1 document box)
Creator: Kenk, Roman, 1898-
Language: English

Administrative Information

Prefered Citation
Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7383, Roman Kenk Papers

Historical Note

Roman Kenk (1898-1988) was an invertebrate zoologist and authority on the morphology, ecology, and taxonomy of freshwater flatworms. Born in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, he received his Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Graz, Austria, in 1921. From 1921 to 1938, Kenk taught zoology at the University of Ljubljana, except for the years 1931-1932 when he was a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow at the University of Virginia. Kenk emigrated to Puerto Rico in 1938, and became a naturalized United States citizen in 1942. He served as Professor of Biology at the University of Puerto Rico from 1938 to 1948, before moving to Washington, D.C., to become a bibliographer at the Library of Congress. After his retirement in 1966, Kenk was appointed Research Associate in the Department of Invertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), where he was placed in charge of building the flatworm specimen collection and library. He remained at NMNH until 1987.

Kenk published over forty papers on flatworms. Nine invertebrates were named in his honor, including a family of flatworms called Kenkiidae. He donated his personal collection of flatworms to NMNH.

Descriptive Entry

The papers of Roman Kenk document his research on flatworms during all phases of his career. They include three series of correspondence covering the identification, acquisition, and exchange of specimens; the preparation and review of publications; and collecting work in Europe, Puerto Rico, and all regions of the United States. Also included are diaries documenting Kenk's daily activities as a Research Associate in the Department of Invertebrate Zoology, NMNH, from 1967 to 1987. The diaries also contain data from several collecting trips taken by Kenk.
Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
- Flatworms
- Invertebrate zoology
- Invertebrates
- Zoologists
- Zoology

Types of Materials:
- Diaries
- Manuscripts

Names:
- Kenk, Roman, 1898-
- Library of Congress
- National Museum of Natural History (U.S.). Department of Invertebrate Zoology
- Rockefeller Foundation
- University of Graz
- University of Ljubljana
- University of Puerto Rico (1903-1966)
- University of Virginia