



Smithsonian Institution Archives

## Herbert Girton Deignan Papers, 1916-1970

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Washington, D.C.  
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## Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <i>osiaref@si.edu</i>
Creator:	Deignan, Herbert Girton, 1906-
Title:	Herbert Girton Deignan Papers
Dates:	1916-1970
Quantity:	0.1 linear meter.

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7465, Deignan, Herbert Girton, 1906-, Herbert Girton Deignan Papers

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## Historical Note

Herbert Girton Deignan (1906-1968), ornithologist and authority on the birds of Thailand, received the B.A. degree from Princeton University in 1928. That same year he took a position as Master in the Prince Royal College in Chiangmai, northern Siam. Deignan remained in Siam intermittently until 1937 and amassed a large collection of birds for the United States National Museum (USNM). In 1938, he was appointed Scientific Aid in the Division of Birds, USNM. He was promoted to Assistant Curator in 1940, Associate Curator in 1942, and Curator in 1959. Deignan retired in 1962.

During World War II, Deignan served in the Office of Strategic Services, 1944-1946, primarily in southern Asia. In 1948, he went to northern Australia as a member of the Commonwealth of Australia-National Geographic Society-Smithsonian Expedition to Arnhem Land. He also conducted field work for the USNM in Thailand, 1952-1953, and Madagascar, 1962.

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## Descriptive Entry

These papers consist of photographs, including images of Deignan in Siam in the 1930s and on the 1948 Arnhem Land Expedition; letters written by Deignan to his mother from Siam, Central America, and Europe, 1931-1939; letters written by Deignan to family members, 1942-1948, including a few from Australia while serving on the Arnhem Land Expedition; official letters concerning his USNM career; certificates; and biographical materials on Deignan.

## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Ornithologists  
Ornithology.

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Australia, Commonwealth of-National Geographic Society- Smithsonian Expedition to Arnhem Land (1948)

Commonwealth of Australia-National Geographic Society- Smithsonian Expedition to Arnhem Land (1948)

Deignan, H. G. (Herbert Girton), 1906-

Weber, Walter Alois, 1905 or -6

## Container Listing

### Box 1

Folder 1 Photographs, c. 1916-1960s

Folder 2 Color photograph of a painting by Walter A. Weber of a bird, Harfactes Oreskios Stellae (Accession 05-224)

Folder 3 Correspondence from Deignan to his mother, 1931-1939

Folder 4 Correspondence from Deignan to his nephew (Accession 05-224)

Folder 5 Correspondence, certificates, newspaper clippings, etc.

Folder 6 Biographical Information

Folder 7 Order of the White Elephant (Thailand)

Folder 8 Correspondence, 1960-1964 (Accession 09-059)