



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Herbert Girton Deignan Papers, 1916-1970

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Herbert Girton Deignan Papers
Identifier:	Record Unit 7465
Date:	1916-1970
Extent:	0.5 cu. ft. (1 document box)
Creator::	Deignan, H. G. (Herbert Girton), 1906-1968
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

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

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.

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:

Ornithology

Types of Materials:

Manuscripts

Photographs

Names:

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

Deignan, H. G. (Herbert Girton), 1906-1968

Prince Royal's College (Chiang Mai, Thailand)

Princeton University

United States National Museum

United States National Museum. Division of Birds

United States. Office of Strategic Services

Weber, Walter Alois, 1905 or 1906-

Container Listing

Box 1

- Box 1 of 1 Folder 1 Photographs, c. 1916-1960s
- Image(s): Herbert G. Deignan returning from the mountain (Doi Sutape) in "rote taxi" (bicycle with side car), 1935. Caption includes: "Note shotgun". [Image no. SIA2008-2372]
- Image(s): Herbert G. Deignan as a boy (right), circa 1916-1917. [Image no. SIA2008-2373]
- Image(s): Bird trip in the mountains of Sado Island, Sea of Japan, March 1935. Herbert G. Deignan, Juji Shirasu (with glasses), Taisuke Aono (carrying parcel), and Yosaku Goto. [Image no. SIA2008-2374]
- Image(s): Herbert G. Deignan (right on raft) - Siam, 1930s. Caption: "This might be called a 'study of types of American knees,' with a few Lao knees in the background for comparison". [Image no. SIA2008-2375]
- Image(s): Herbert G. Deignan - Little River, Victoria, Australia, March 6, 1948. [Image no. SIA2008-2376]
- Image(s): Ornithologists with the National Geographic-Smithsonian Institution Expedition to Northern Australia, Herbert G. Deignan (far left), 1948. [Image no. SIA2008-2377]
- Image(s): Herbert G. Deignan - National Geographic-Smithsonian Institution Expedition to Northern Australia, 1948. [Image no. SIA2008-2378]
- Image(s): Herbert G. Deignan - National Geographic-Smithsonian Institution Expedition to Northern Australia, 1948. [Image no. SIA2008-2379]
- Image(s): Herbert G. Deignan, seated at table with bird specimen, on the Arnhem Land Expedition (National Geographic-Smithsonian Expedition to Northern Australia) of 1948. [Image no. SIA2009-1775]
- Box 1 of 1 Folder 2 Color photograph of a painting by Walter A. Weber of a bird, Harfactes Oreskios Stellae (Accession 05-224)
- Image(s): Harfactes Oreskios Stellae, painting by Walter A. Weber, 1942. [Image no. SIA2008-2380]
- Box 1 of 1 Folder 3 Correspondence from Deignan to his mother, 1931-1939
- Box 1 of 1 Folder 4 Correspondence from Deignan to his nephew (Accession 05-224)
- Box 1 of 1 Folder 5 Correspondence, certificates, newspaper clippings, etc.
- Box 1 of 1 Folder 6 Biographical Information
- Box 1 of 1 Folder 7 Order of the White Elephant (Thailand)
- Box 1 of 1 Folder 8 Correspondence, 1960-1964 (Accession 09-059)