



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Oral history interviews with Fenner Albert Chace, 1977

by Smithsonian Institution Archives

Smithsonian Institution Archives
Washington, D.C.
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <i>osiaref@si.edu</i>
Creator:	Chace, Fenner Albert, interviewee
Title:	Oral history interviews with Fenner Albert Chace
Dates:	1977
Quantity:	3 audiotapes (reference copies).

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9514, Chace, Fenner Albert, interviewee, Oral history interviews with Fenner Albert Chace

Historical Note

Fenner Albert Chace, (1908-2004) was a carcinologist and Research Associate of the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), specializing in the taxonomy, morphology, and distribution of decapod Crustacea. He was born in Fall River, Massachusetts, in 1908, where he grew up. His summers were spent in the countryside of Tiverton, Rhode Island, and there he developed an early interest in natural history. Chace majored in biology at Harvard University, receiving the A.B. in 1930, the A.M. in 1931, and the Ph.D. in 1934. From 1934 to 1946, Chace curated the crustacean collection at the Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ), as Assistant Curator, Marine Invertebrates, from 1934 to 1942 and as Curator of Crustacea from 1942 to 1946. Chace held the Agassiz fellowship at the MCZ from 1935 to 1939. After serving in the army during World War II, Chace was appointed Curator of the Division of Marine Invertebrates of the United States National Museum (USNM) in 1946. During his years as Curator, Chace oversaw the growth of the division, the move into the West Wing of the Natural History Building, and the planning of exhibits. In 1963, Chace was appointed the first Senior Scientist in the NMNH, a position devoted entirely to research. During his long career, Chace named over 200 taxa in the Decapoda and Stomatopoda. Chace retired from the position as Senior Zoologist, Department of Invertebrate Zoology in September of 1978, but continued as a Zoologist Emeritus and Research Associate of the NMNH until his death in 2004.

Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives' record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of its staff. Program staff conduct interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also interviews conducted by researchers or

students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

Chace was interviewed for the Oral History Collection because of his long association with the NMNH and outstanding research career.

Descriptive Entry

Chace was interviewed by Pamela M. Henson on 6 and 11 October 1977. The interviews cover Chace's youth and education, curatorial career at the MCZ and NMNH, research interests in decapod Crustacea, service during World War II, and reminiscences about colleagues.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Invertebrate zoology
Museum curators -- Interviews
World War, 1939-1945

Types of Materials:

Audiotapes
Interviews
Oral history
Transcripts

Names:

Barbour, Thomas, 1884-1946
Chace, Fenner Albert
Harvard University. Museum of Comparative Zoology
Henson, Pamela M., interviewer
Hobbs, Horton Holcombe, 1914-1994
National Museum of Natural History (U.S.)
Wetmore, Alexander, 1886-1978

Container Listing

Box 1

Transcripts of Interviews

Interview 1: 6 October 1977

Interview 2: 11 October 1977

Recordings of Interviews

Interview 1: 6 October 1977

Interview 2: 11 October 1977