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Philip L. Wright Zoological Museum (UMZM)

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Fall 2003

### MuseU.M. News, No. 23

University of Montana–Missoula. Philip L. Wright Zoological Museum

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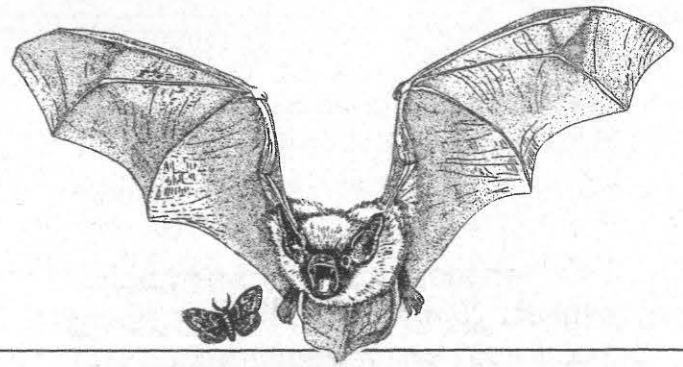
# MUSEU.M. NEWS

FALL 2003

No 23

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE PHILIP L. WRIGHT  
ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM – THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

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## MUSEUM RECEIVES GENE MILLER COLLECTION

During the summer of 2003 the museum acquired the Gene Miller Collection, consisting of approximately 200 mammal and bird specimens. Gene was one of our most consistent donors through the years, donating well-documented specimens that he had collected and prepared himself. He passed away this year, and wanted his collection to come to the Zoological Museum. This collection is unusual in that it consists of mostly large animals, including a live mount of a large black bear, a sandhill crane in a flying pose, several large caribou racks, and articulated skeletons of a black bear, bobcat, and pine marten. Gene collected in both Montana and Alaska. Many of the specimens were added to the teaching collection, fulfilling Gene's wish that his collection would continue to be used in education. Thanks to Kerry Foresman for coordinating the donation and transportation of the collection to Missoula.

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### MUSEUM REACHES MILESTONES

This fall the Zoological Museum has reached several notable milestones that deserve mention.

- Thanks to a huge effort by Rochelle Bennett, the Dennis L. Flath Collection of small mammals, which we received in 2001, has been completely cataloged and filed in the museum. In one of the largest cataloging efforts in the museum's history, Rochelle continued the work of Amy Singer (now at the Field Museum) and personally cataloged, labeled, and filed over 550 consecutive mammal specimens. Her great accuracy with the data and dedication to the project are appreciated!
- The Mammal Teaching Collection has reached the 500<sup>th</sup> specimen! Our research collection of mammals is ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> in the U.S. in total number of specimens, and now our teaching collection alone totals more specimens than many entire mammal collections.

- The museum's dedicated volunteers who prepare study skins as part of our Friday Afternoon Bird Skinners group have prepared over 50 bird skins and have actually cleaned off an entire shelf in our bird freezer! Thanks to Crystal Foster, Charles Miller, Kate Shick, Larry Weeks, and Nami Bittner.

### RECENT ACCESSIONS

David Ausband donated several skulls and carcasses of the **Swift Fox** (*Vulpes velox*) from his research area in Glacier Co., MT. Previously we only had one specimen of the Swift Fox in the museum.

A road-killed **Ancient Murrelet** (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*) was found by Vita Wright along the Nez Perce Road in Ravalli Co. This is only the 8<sup>th</sup> record of the Ancient Murrelet from Montana.

Diane Bilderback, formerly of DBS, brought in a **Pileated Woodpecker** (*Dryocopus pileatus*) that she had found dead in her front yard in the Rattlesnake.

Paul Hendricks of the Montana Natural Heritage Program donated several significant specimens, including a **Great Basin Pocket Mouse** (*Perognathus parvus*) and an abandoned nest of a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** (*Dendroica nigrescens*).

A **Great Grey Owl** (*Strix nebulosa*) was found near Georgetown Lake by Mark Behan. The owl was found lying dead on a snowbank beneath a power pole. This is the second Great Grey Owl to come to the museum since 1999.

David Schmetterling of MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks found a **Beaver** (*Castor canadensis*) that had become trapped in a fish net at Milltown Reservoir. It was prepared as a skin and a skeleton for the teaching collection.

Jeff Marks recently donated a **Sage Sparrow** (*Amphispiza belli*) and a **Cassin's Vireo** (*Vireo cassinii*). These were both prepared for the research collection by Kate Davis.



Meet the Staff! David Dyer - Curator; Rochelle Bennett - Assistant Curator; Brooke Easterday - Museum Preparation Lab, Jon Harges - Museum Exhibit Coordinator (Intern); Crystal Foster - Coordinator, Friday Bird Skinners Group. Phone - 243-4743.

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