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Philip L. Wright Zoological Museum (UMZM)

Summer 2004

MuseU.M. News, No. 24

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

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University of Montana–Missoula. Philip L. Wright Zoological Museum, "MuseU.M. News, No. 24" (2004).

Philip L. Wright Zoological Museum (UMZM) Newsletters. 24.

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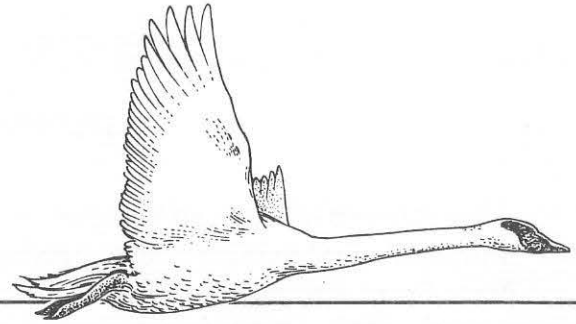
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MUSEU.M. NEWS

SUMMER 2004

No. 24

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



RECENT ACCESSIONS

Jay Villemarette, of Skulls Unlimited International, Inc. donated two unusual skull casts to the museum, a **Numbat** (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*) and a **Short-nosed Bandicoot** (*Isodon macyoursus*). These are from the Orders Dasyuromorphia and Peramelemorphia, respectively, and will be invaluable for teaching and comparative purposes. The museum now has at least one specimen from 24 of the 26 Orders of mammals!

Two **White Pelicans** (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) were recently found dead and brought to the museum. One was found floating in the Missouri River and recovered by Marilyn Seastone, and the other was donated by Ty and Kristina Smucker.

Wilma O'Gara donated more specimens from the Bart O'Gara Collection, including a spectacular horn mount of an **Asian Water Buffalo** (*Bubalus bubalis*) and several **Pronghorn** (*Antilocapra americana*) horn mounts, skulls, and valuable scapulae from known-age individuals.

Jeff Marks arranged for the donation of a collection of window-killed birds recovered by Charles Larson of Hamilton. This included a female **Black-throated Blue Warbler** (*Dendroica caerulescens*), which is the first female of this species in our collection since 1902!

Road-killed birds and snakes were salvaged by Brett Walker and P. Ryerson during fieldwork in Big Horn Co., Montana. These included the **Common Poorwill** (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*), **American Coot** (*Fulica americana*), **Gopher Snake** (*Pituophis catenifer*), and a **Prairie Rattlesnake** (*Crotalus viridis viridis*).

Thanks to Heather Davis of the U.M Flight Lab for arranging the donation of a **Rhea** (*Rhea americana*) and a 7-foot tall **Ostrich** (*Struthio camelus*). Both will be prepared as skeletons for the comparative skeletal collection.

Michael Schwitters and Jeff Marks collected two **Eurasian Collared-Doves** (*Streptopelia decaocto*), the first records of this species in the museum, and a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** (*Sphyrapicus varius*) from the Freezeout Lake Wildlife Management Area.

A **Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*) was found dead along Rock Creek by Lorraine Corra, and brought to the museum by Charles Miller. The bird had an injury to its right wrist, and we will try to determine the cause of death when the bird is prepared.

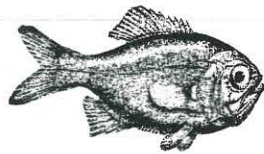
MUSEUM HOSTS BIRD PREPARATION WORKSHOP

On May 15, 2004, right during the U.M. graduation ceremonies, the Zoological Museum was conducting a bird preparation training session for the Flathead Audubon Chapter and for museum staff and volunteers. We were very fortunate to have DBS's own bird-skinning expert Fernando Villasenor generously provide his time and talents to teach his methods of preparing museum skins of birds. Not wanting to see this only once, Charles Miller arranged for a video production company to tape the session for future reference. Thanks to Fernando, and to Sandy and Harry LaForge for the professional video! This video will be a great training tool for new staff and a valuable reference.

EXHIBITS UPDATE

Want to see an African Hoopoe or an Eurasian Capercaillie ? Jon Harges, the museum's first exhibit intern, produced the exhibit "Bart's Birds - A Selection of Birds From Around the World" in the first floor hallway in the Health Sciences building. The exhibit features mounted heads of birds that Bart O'Gara collected during his travels. Jon did a great job on the exhibit, so stop by to see it!

This fall Jon will begin work on a large exhibit to be installed in the new exhibit case on the first floor. This case was generously funded by Wilma O'Gara, and will explain the difference between antlers and horns. The exhibit will then focus on the unusual horns of the pronghorn, a species extensively studied by Bart O'Gara.



Meet the Staff! David Dyer - Curator; Brooke Easterday - Museum Preparation Lab; Jon Harges - Museum Exhibit Intern; Crystal Foster - Coordinator, Friday Bird Skinners Group; Charles Miller, Cheryl Bregen - Lead Volunteers. Phone - 243-4743.

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