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Winter 1999

### MuseU.M. News, No. 13

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

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# MUSEUM NEWS

WINTER 1999

No. 13

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

## RECENT ACCESSIONS BY THE MUSEUM

Bart O'Gara donated several interesting specimens from his collection of African and Montana mammals, including shoulder and horn mounts of a **Grey Duiker** (*Sylvicapra grimmia*), and horn mounts of a **Southern Reedbuck** (*Redunca arundinum*), **Mountain Reedbuck** (*Redunca fulvorufula*), and a **Mountain Goat** (*Oreamnos americanus*).

Joseph Dulac and Bart O'Gara donated a fine shoulder mount of a Montana **Grizzly Bear** (*Ursus arctos*). This bear was collected in October 1962 in Gallatin Co.

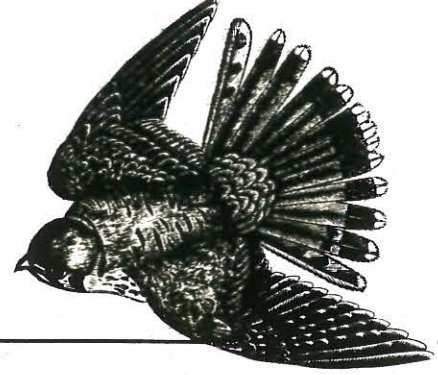
A partial skeleton was brought to the museum that was discovered by hikers in southern Sweet Grass Co. The hikers initially suspected that it might be human, due to the lengths of the long bones and the fact that a hat was found with the skeleton, and eventually it became a forensic case examined by the UM Anthropology Dept. After arriving at the museum the skeleton was identified as **Bighorn Sheep** (*Ovis canadensis*). Though it was expected that Bighorn were in this region, this is the first museum record documenting their presence in Sweet Grass Co. We have no explanation for the hat!

Thanks to Gene Miller of Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks for preparing and bringing to the museum a complete skeleton of a **Mountain Lion** (*Felis [Puma] concolor*). The carcass was found after a camper apparently heard two mountain lions fighting. When the dermestids finish cleaning the skeleton we will examine the skull and cervical vertebrae for signs of tooth punctures.

A **Common Murre** (*Uria aalge*) from the Alaska Sea Life Center was acquired for the museum by Shauna Brosman. An excellent study-skin was prepared for the teaching collection by Julie Fuller.

Jeff Marks brought in a **Pine Grosbeak** (*Pinicola enucleator*) in transitional plumage, found on the UM campus. This is the first specimen in the collection exhibiting this type of plumage.

Other interesting birds recovered last fall include: a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** (*Dendroica coronata*) from Missoula Co. by Rusty Hutto; a **Virginia Rail** (*Rallus limicola*) from Ravalli Co. by Judy Hoy; a **Common Raven** (*Corvus corax*) from Lake Co. by Chad Olson;



a **Brown Creeper** (*Certhia americana*) from UM campus by Del Kilgore; and a **Boreal Chickadee** (*Parus hudsonicus*) from Flathead Co. by Mary Ann Donovan.

## THE MUSEUM NEEDS MAPS

Did you get a new Rand McNally Road Atlas of North America for Christmas? Instead of throwing your 1998 atlas away, extra copies are needed in the museum and herbarium. These are very useful for checking locality data for specimens. Also needed are recent editions of the DeLorme Atlas and Gazetteer for Montana and adjacent states and provinces. Call Dave Dyer at 243-4743 or drop off copies at the museum or herbarium.

## TOUR PROGRAM CONTINUES

The Museum's successful tour program, operated in conjunction with the Montana Natural History Center, will continue during spring semester. Our experienced team of tour leaders are all returning for this semester: Shauna Brosman, Renee Koplan, Matt Singleton, and Stephanie White. To schedule a tour, call the Montana Natural History Center at 327-0405.

## AMERICA'S PASTIME - MUSEUMS!

A recent article published by the American Association of Museums (Museum News Nov./Dec. 1998) estimated the total annual visitation to museums in the United States. The total was an astounding 865 million visits (see reverse of this newsletter). Institutions related to natural history, including zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, and science centers account for 341 million of the total visitation. Also, a survey by the Travel Industry Association of America ranked visits to museums and historical sites as third among all free-time activities. Despite the popularity of museums, Western Montana has no public museum related to natural history! This gives us incentive to continue our exhibit program in cooperation with the Montana Natural History Center. We are currently constructing small, topical exhibits at the Center's offices at Fort Missoula, and hope to develop it into a more ambitious exhibition program in the future.



## The Visitor Boom

No organization provides a verifiable total number of annual visits to museums in the United States (for a time, AAM used a rough estimate from its 1989 data survey of the field: 600 million estimated visits in the first years of the 1990s). But by combining current available statistics from different sources, we can arrive at a reasonably accurate figure (keeping in mind that this is an estimate).

- 1) The NEA estimates 225 million visits by adults (anyone over 18) to art museums in 1997. If we posit one child per two adults (this includes school groups), the figure becomes 337 million visits.
- 2) The Association of Youth Museums states 1997 attendance (total number of visits, including repeat visitors) at its 147 member museums as just over 22 million.
- 3) The Association of Science-Technology Centers puts its annual visitation at 116 million last year.
- 4) The Association of Zoos and Aquariums estimates 120 million visits in 1997. This gives us a running total of 595 million.
- 5) The American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta estimates 77 million visits to its member institutions in 1996 (but this represents approximately half of all visits to U.S. gardens and arboreta).

Using the latest available statistics gathered by the Smithsonian Institution's Institutional Studies Office (ISO) in 1995, we can fill in the picture.

- 6) ISO estimated that 28 million adults made "at least one visit" to a United States natural history museum in 1994.
- 7) The ISO figure for history museums or historical sites in 1994 is 69 million adults making "at least one visit."

But note that figures 6 and 7 do not include visits by children, nor do they calculate repeat visits. If we posit one child per two adults for figures 6 and 7, we add 48 million visits.

If we estimate one repeat visit for one-third of the total audience in figures 6 and 7, we add another 48 million visits.

Now we arrive at a conservative estimate of total visits (not total visitors) to American museums, science centers, gardens, zoos, and aquariums in a single year: 865 million.

### ESTIMATED ANNUAL VISITATION, U.S. MUSEUMS

Art museums	225 million
Visits by children	112 million
Youth museums	22 million
Science & technology centers	116 million
Botanical gardens & arboreta	77 million
Zoos & aquariums	120 million
Natural history museums	28 million
History museums & historical sites	69 million
Visits by children	48 million
Repeat visits	48 million
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TOTAL	865 million