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UM STUDENT DONATES FOSSIL COLLECTION TO UNIVERSITY

MISSOULA--

Ralph Nichols, a Big Hole rancher, has recently donated over 1,200 Tertiary Vertebrate fossil specimens to the University of Montana.

The specimens were collected and prepared by Nichols between 1936 and 1980, and are from Lemhi County, Idaho and Beaverhead County, Montana.

Nichols' gift will be added to the geology department's Middle Tertiary Vertebrate faunal collection which is generally recognized to be the finest and most complete of its kind in North America, according to Graham Thompson, chairman of the UM geology department.

Professor Robert Fields, the UM's Tertiary faunal expert, gave a conservative preliminary value estimate of \$10,000 to the collection.

Nichols is currently pursuing a Ph.D. degree in geology at the UM.

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