

Wilfred Hudson Osgood

President

W. H. Osgood was born 8 December 1875 in Rochester, New Hampshire; he was the first of five children. When the family moved to California in 1888, they settled in the Santa Clara Valley in a rural area at the south end of San Francisco Bay. Osgood's primary schooling was in Rochester, and he attended three years of high school in Santa Clara, but the family then moved into the city of San Jose. Osgood had become interested in birds and egg collecting and was involved in the organization of the Cooper Ornithological Club in San Jose, which subsequently became a major professional organization.

After graduating from high school, Osgood accepted a teaching position in a small school in Wilcox, Arizona, for a year and then entered Stanford University shortly after its founding. Here he came within the orbit of the eminent zoologist David Starr Jordan, then president of the university. It was Jordan's suggestion that he leave Stanford before completing his BA degree in order to take a position in C. Hart Merriam's Bureau of Biological Survey, but he was eventually awarded his degree in 1899. He spent over a decade with the Survey, publishing a number of papers in the North American Fauna series, culminating in his monographic revision of the genus *Peromyscus* in 1909. In that year he joined the staff of the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, the second of his two posts. He was Assistant Curator of Mammals and Birds, receiving his Ph.D. from University of Chicago in 1918 for a dissertation entitled "A Monographic Study of the American Marsupial, *Caenolestes*," which was published a few years later by the Field Museum. He served as Chief Curator of Zoology for 20 years, until his retirement in 1941. During his career at the Field Museum, he alternated between studying collections, both at the Field and in museums in other parts of the world, and conducting field expeditions. He participated in about 20 expeditions, 8 of which were major foreign ventures. As a result, the Field Museum mammal collections grew greatly in size and importance during his tenure. From his retirement until his death 6 years later on 20 June 1947, he remained fully engaged in publishing scientific papers. He was active not only in scientific societies, including the Biological Society of Washington, the Chicago Zoological Society, the American Ornithologists' Union, and the British Ornithologists' Union, but also in a number of other clubs such as the Explorers Club.

Like Nelson, his predecessor, he remained a bachelor.

Obituaries

Patterson, B.D. 1983. The journal of Wilfred Osgood: The Marshall Field Chilean Expedition of 1922-23. *Field Museum of Natural History Bulletin* 54(2):8-11; 28-33.

Sanborn, C. C. 1948. Wilfred Hudson Osgood: 1875-1947. *Journal of Mammalogy*, 29(2):95-112.