A portion of the Gary Gier Lepidoptera collection. The morpho butterflies comprised of many species of Neotropical butterfly under the genus Morpho. This genus includes more than 29 accepted species and 147 accepted subspecies found mostly in South America, Mexico, and Central America.

(Photograph taken from the Caribou County Sun, Soda Springs, Idaho Thursday, November 12, 2020)
Director's Message

Well, we thought COVID-19 would wrap up last year, WRONG! It seems that the Museum Community has survived the virus and many of us have continued to work in the Museum during this past year. The Museum has been closed to the general public, following the actions of The College of Idaho. The College of Idaho has been closed for the most part, but had to remain open for international students, many who had no place else to go. The College is opening back up now, facilitated by those who are vaccinated against the virus. The College plans to be fully open for this fall semester (end of August-early September). The Museum will follow that lead and have our first live Museum Workday and Seminar on September 11 and will be fully open to the public following that date.

In spite of COVID, this past year has been very productive for the Museum. This is in no small part, due to the fantastic volunteers that we have. Our virtual Museum Workday Seminars have been interesting and available to a wider audience than our past seminars that were restricted to the Museum. The Entomology Section received two research grants: one by Dr. Ron Bitner for the study of bees of specialty crops in the area and one by Dr. James D. McIver for the curation of a large collection of SageSTEP invertebrates. Both of these grant projects have allowed the Museum to hire students and volunteers and to build our collections. The Museum has expanded by accepting several private collections, which may have been lost to science had we not stepped in. We broke previous records with the funds we took in during The College of Idaho Give Day. Volunteers and Friends of the Museum continue to add the Museum to their estates, which helps insure our future. The Museum made more progress with the identification of several groups in our collections (especially beetles and flies) which was done by experts. Some scientific research publications have resulted from our work. More details on these items can be found in this annual report and in the Museum.

We plan to move forward and continue to grow, help with the education of students, and provide a national resource for science.

William H. Clark, Director
Museum Work Day Seminars for 2020-2021

July 11

August 1
Howard Emry, Curator of Paleontology, Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History, “Pleistocene Deposits of the American Falls Formation, Southeastern Idaho.”

September 7
Dr. Luc Leblanc, Collection Manager, W.F. Barr Entomology Museum, University of Idaho “The Real Missionaries.”

October 3
Dr. Eric Yensen, Curator of Mammals, Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History, “Rototillers with Jaws: The Ecology and Natural History of Badgers.”

November 7
Kirk Halford—Deputy Preservation Office/State Archaeologist Bureau of Land Management “What’s the Digs on BLM Idaho Archeology.”

December 4
Gipson Honors Students “Museum Specimens and the Meaning of Things”.

January 9
William H. Clark, Director, Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History, “Biodiversity in San Basillio, Baja California Sur, Mexico.”

February 1
Bill Nance, Curator of Ethnographical & Anthropological Collection, Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History, “Archaeology of Middle America.”

March 6
Dr. Eric Yensen, Curator of Mammals, Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History, “The Other Side of Gophers.”

April 3
Jan Summers Duffy, Curator of Archaeology, Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History, “Treasures of the Tomb King Tut Exhibit.”

May 1
Dr. Ron Bitner, Research Assistant Entomology, Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History “The Bees of Southwest Idaho.”

June 6

Museum Board

Josh Andersen—Student Representative

Dr. Ron Bitner
Jack Cafferty—Treasurer
William H. Clark—Museum Director
Courtney Covolo—Student Representative
Dr. Barbara Erster—Chair
Billie Ann Farley—Secretary
Dr. Kaitlin Maguire
Dr. James Tomey
Ethnographical/Anthropological Curator William Nance visited Teotihuacan, Mexico in December. While he was there he delivered face coverings to some of the indigenous community, free of charge. In the middle picture above Bill shows what he will be delivering. The picture on the right is Bill passing out the face coverings. While there Bill was asked to be a part of a traditional wedding ceremony, pictured to the left.

Did you Know?

There is a Museum and Friends Club. This is a group of students interested in volunteering for the Museum and attending Museum events. This year they had a great turn out at the Involvement Fair with several new and enthusiastic members. They hope to better incorporate the Museum into the College of Idaho Experience for as many students as possible. The Museum would like to recognize Courtney Covolo, Josh Andersen, and Reina Watkins for their leadership in the club.

Museum Curator Lends A Hand to King Tut Exhibit

Curator of Archaeology Jan Summers Duffy was approached by The Discovery Center of Idaho to consult on the traveling exhibit, titled Treasures of the Tomb King Tut Exhibit, which opened in July, 2020. Jan Summers Duffy worked as the onsite Egyptologist and curator during the year the exhibit was at The Discovery Center. The College of Idaho sophomore Regan Moore, who is Jan Summers Duffy’s intern, worked regularly at The Discovery Center in Boise to make sure the exhibit was in proper order.
Inside the Museum

(Photographs and text provided by Misty Koeppen)

Craig Baird, Curator in Entomology, on the left, works with work study students Muna Warsaw and Sakhokuhla Littler.

Angela Lints, right, has been working on curating and identifying ants and spiders from the SageSTEP project.

On the left, Curator Craig Baird, looks at specimens with work study student Karine Sikapin Kambou.

Craig Baird, Curator in Entomology, reviews some of the specimens in the OJSM collection.

Although the Museum was closed to the general public, work in the Museum continued. Work study students helped bring a fresh look to the Museum by painting the display cabinets.

Photograph on the left: Tigran Abrahamyan and Sakhokuhla Littler. Students employed through the student work study program.

Center: Tigran Abrahamyan and Sangita Jimba.

Right: Sakhokuhla Littler

(Photographs provided by Misty Koeppen)
Community Outreach/Involvement

Community member David Gassel brought in this specimen for identification. Curator Nate Carpenter provided the following information on the specimen, “I would guess it is a naturally occurring ferrosilicon. If you had a swamp deposit rich in carbon and iron that comes into contact with a high silica melt (rhyolite magma) you could get a high silica rock with increased iron concentration. I would have expected it to be slightly magnetic. I base this on appearance and the high specific gravity, which is greater than hematite.”

The specimens shown above were brought to OJSM by Denise and Don Warner of Caldwell. The bones were found in Weiser, Idaho in the late 1950s. These bones were sticking out of a river/creek bank. Curator Nate Carpenter identified these as mammoth bones. (Photographs provided by Misty Koeppen)

This specimen was brought in by community member David Gassel for identification. It was identified by curator Nate Carpenter as a common geode.

Pollinator Celebration at Garden City Library, June 26, 2021
Pictured left to right
Batu Getachew Olang, Bill Clark, Barb Alexander, Dave Ward and Misty Koeppen
Brad Stokes, Extension Educator from the University of Idaho Extension, Elmore County sent in the photographs above for identification. Jerry Smith identified the specimen as left pharyngeal arch of a carp.

Dr. Ron Bitner, Research Associate in Entomology provided a Zoom presentation for the Pahove Chapter of the Master Naturalists.

**Bees, Wine and Biodiversity in the Vineyard presented by Ron Bitner**

*Importance of Biodiversity to Agriculture with Emphasis on Pollinators and Vineyards*

*On Tuesday, December 8th at 7pm*

Zoom meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83379178580
Dr. Loren G. Davis is a Professor of Anthropology at Oregon State University and is the Executive Director of the Keystone Archaeological Research Fund. His research focuses on the Pleistocene archaeology and geoarchaeology of western North America and on the topic of the early peopling of the Americas. Dr. Davis received his undergraduate and Master’s degrees in Anthropology from Oregon State University and obtained a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Alberta.

Professional Publications


Bouffard, S. 2021. Gem State Milestones, Spring and Summer, Heard Bird, URL: https://doi.org/10.4289/0013-8797.123.2.429

Munguía-Ortega, K.K., E. López-Reyes, and F. Sara Ceccarelli. 2021. Testing the Accuracy of Vegetation-Based Ecoregions for Predicting the Species Composition of Blow Flies (Diptera: Calliphoridae). *Journal of Insect Science*, 21(1): 6; 1–9,


Donors

Community Outreach/Involvement Continued

Butterfly Count

On July 12, 2020 the Museum sponsored the 30th Annual Boise Front 4th of July Butterfly Count. Many annual butterfly counts were cancelled in 2020 thanks to the threat of COVID, however, the Boise Count carried on, although, with some modifications necessitated by the pandemic. Because of social distancing restrictions the count was limited to six volunteers (usually masked) who spent 8.5 hours visiting five Boise-area locations to seek out and identify butterflies. Even with the reduced number of observers (a typical count brings out 25-35 attendees) 526 individual butterflies representing 40 different species were recorded. Most common butterflies included Variable Checkerspots (79), Boisduval's Blues (60) and Common Wood Nymphs (56). All data was submitted to the North American Butterfly Associ-
Guest Researchers

Pictured to the left are Dr. Art Gilbert and William H. Clark, Museum Director. While in the Museum, the two examined the Museum’s Coleoptera collection, family Chrysomelidae (leaf beetles). Clark has known Dr. Gilbert for over 40 years. During this time the two have worked on identification of the Chrysomelidae of Baja California. Gilbert has also helped with identification of specimens in the Museum. Dr. Gilbert worked for the California Department of Agriculture as a taxonomic specialist, and is now retired. (Photograph provided by William Clark)

Pictured at the right is Dr. James D. McIver from Oregon State University. He is working on reconciling part of the SageSTEP spider project housed in the Orma J. Smith Museum at The College of Idaho. The project is funded by a grant received by Jim for the amount of $5,000.00. He serves as the principal researcher for the grant.

SageSTEP is a long-term multidisciplinary experiment evaluating methods of sagebrush steppe restoration in the Great Basin. Sagebrush communities have been identified as one of the most threatened land types in North America, and as much as half of this land type has already been lost in the Great Basin. Many of the sagebrush communities that remain are in poor health. SageSTEP scientists are studying the effects of land management options to provide resource managers with improved information to make restoration management decisions with reduced risk and uncertainty. This project resulted in thousands of invertebrate specimens from the Great Basin now deposited in the Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History.

Pictured to the left are Craig Baird and Skyler Burrows. Craig is a Curator in Entomology and specializes in bees. Skyler is a bee specialist who will be working in the Museum on the Snake River Bee Project.

(Photograph and text provided by Misty Koeppen)
In November, the Museum received a generous donation from Gary and Rosli Gier, 18,000 butterfly and moth specimens. Gier was a biology teacher in the Soda Springs School District for 30 years before retiring. His collection includes specimens from Canada to Peru. Countries like Brazil, Ecuador, French Guiana, Malaysia, Vietnam, Europe, Mexico and other countries. The collection will be split between The College of Idaho Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History and the University of Idaho W.F. Barr Entomological Museum in Moscow.
Mission Statement

The Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History seeks to instill an awareness of the natural world through the educational program of The College of Idaho, provide public service, and serve the general and research public by holding in trust collections of zoological, botanical, paleontological, archaeological, anthropological, and other natural history objects for this and future generations. The Museum adds depth and intellectual development to the education of College of Idaho students by making the materials entrusted to it available for classroom, research, and other appropriate educational use. The Museum serves the students and general public by offering tours, interpretive displays, and other educational programs that foster life-long learning by all who visit.

Vision Statement

The Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History will be the premier collections-based environmental education and natural history resource in our region. The Museum’s programs and resources will be integrated into the educational programs of the College to help meet the needs of College of Idaho students and provide outreach to the general public.

Museum Staff
William H. Clark—Museum Director
Misty Koeppen—Museum Administrative Assistant (October 1, 2019—Present)

To the right is a photograph of Robert Ekin from Kuna. Robert recently donated his butterfly collection to OJSM.
(Photograph provided by Paul Castrovillo

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