

Ecology in the Archives

Documenting ESA's history at the University of Georgia Libraries

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Access finding aid at <http://tinyurl.com/j7tgxn1>

Background

The University of Georgia Libraries has been the official repository of ESA's historical records since the 1970s. With support from ESA, earnest efforts began in 2015 to enhance the inventory of the records and make them discoverable to researchers via the web. Today, over 100 linear feet of records and thousands of volumes of ESA publications are open to the public.

UGA is home to the Odum School of Ecology, named for the late UGA professor, former ESA president, and "father of ecology" Eugene Odum. The ecology program at UGA is known for its rigorous coursework, interdisciplinary approach, service-learning courses and meaningful opportunities for field experience, independent research and studies abroad.



Collection Scope and Content

The collection contains over 100 linear feet of records documenting the history of ESA since 1915. Records are arranged into groups by their association with 43 distinguished members of ESA over many decades. In addition to Odum, notable members whose records form part of the collection include Charles Adams, Arthur Vestal, and William Castle.

The records document pivotal moments in ESA's history, including its founding, its earliest annual meetings, and its focus on environmental issues. Record types include:

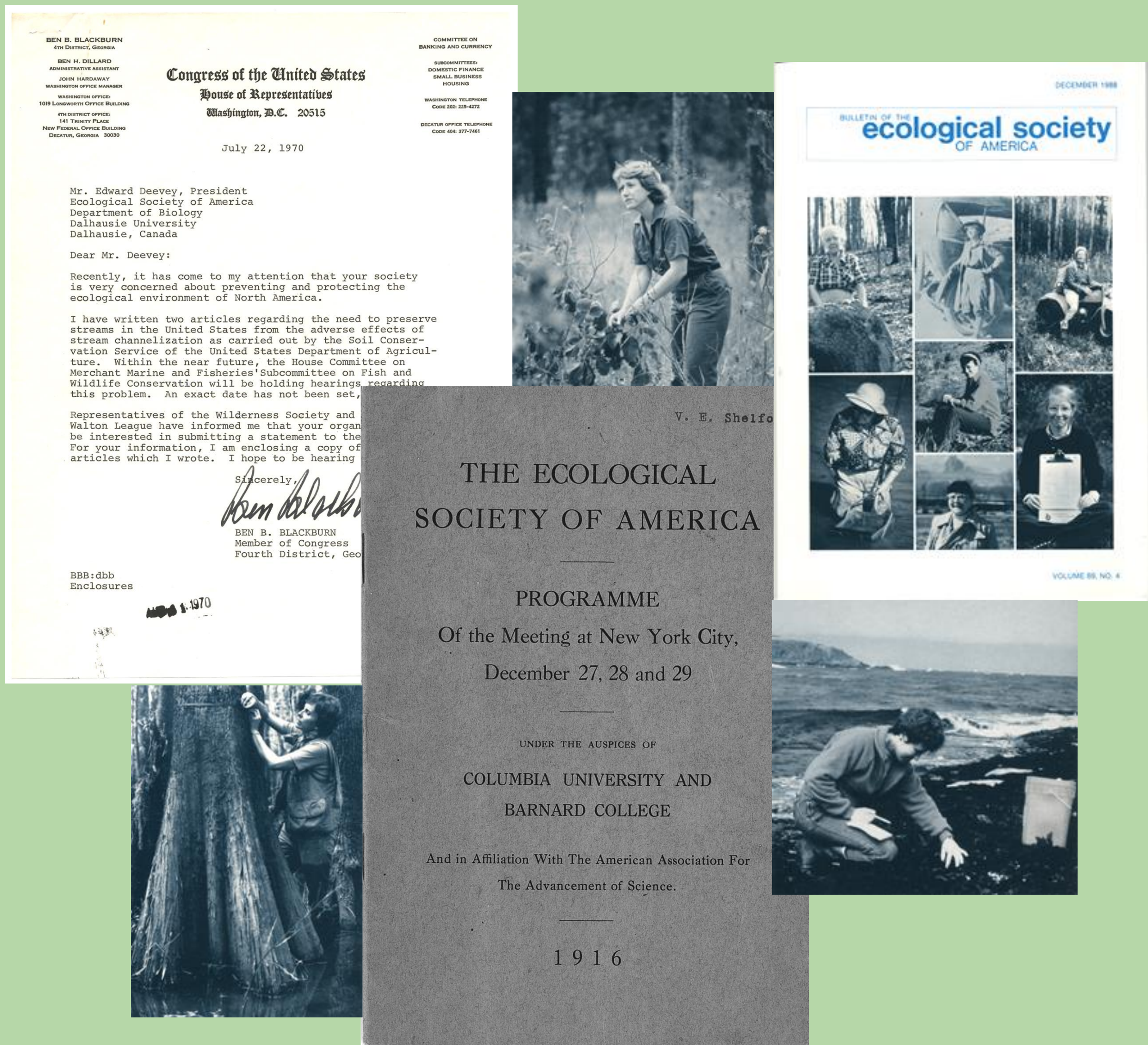
- Correspondence
 - Professional
 - Interorganizational
 - ESA committees, councils, and sections
- Meeting Minutes
- Subject files
- Research materials
- Formal publications
 - *Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America*
 - *Ecology*
 - *Ecological Monographs*
 - *Ecological Applications*



User Community

The ESA records are an indispensable historical resource for:

- ESA members, officers, and committees
- Ecologists
- Historians of science
- Historians of environmentalism



A selection of materials from the ESA records. Includes a letter to former ESA President Edward Deevey, an annual meeting program from 1916, an issue of the *Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America*, and images of fieldwork.

Archives Facilities



Integrated security
Customized climate control
Galleries for exhibits
Classrooms to integrate archival materials into instruction
Space for colloquia and other events
Growth for 40 years

Plans for Further Development

With support from ESA, University Archives is employing a student assistant whose primary role will be to complete the processing of the ESA records in order to make them publicly available. The assistant will report directly to the University Archivist. When work on ESA records concludes, the assistant will begin processing other significant ecology collections held by UGA. The plan of work is as follows:

- **August-September 2016:** Complete the processing of ESA records.
- **August-December 2016:** Arrange, describe, and provide public access to the papers of Frank B. Golley, former ESA president and landscape ecologist.
- **2017:** Index and provide web access to oral history interviews conducted by Dennis Knight. Interview subjects include longtime members of ESA and the Institute of Ecology.
- **2017-2018:** Arrange, describe, and provide public access to the papers of Eugene Odum, former ESA president and ecosystem ecologist.
- **Ongoing:** Continue to work with ESA representatives to transfer new records to the archives.

Conclusion

The ESA records capture a century of organizational history and provide a crucial record of the development of ecology as a scientific discipline, the relationship between the scientific and conservation communities, and the work of the field's most important figures.

The records also form of a cornerstone of UGA Libraries' growing collections in the



environmental sciences, which document Southeastern river networks, watersheds, wildlife conservation, and related topics.

Acknowledgements

The UGA Libraries' acquisition and processing of the ESA records has been made possible with the administrative and funding support of ESA. The Society's Historical Records Committee has been an invaluable partner in the project by providing contextual information and engaging in outreach efforts for the collection.

