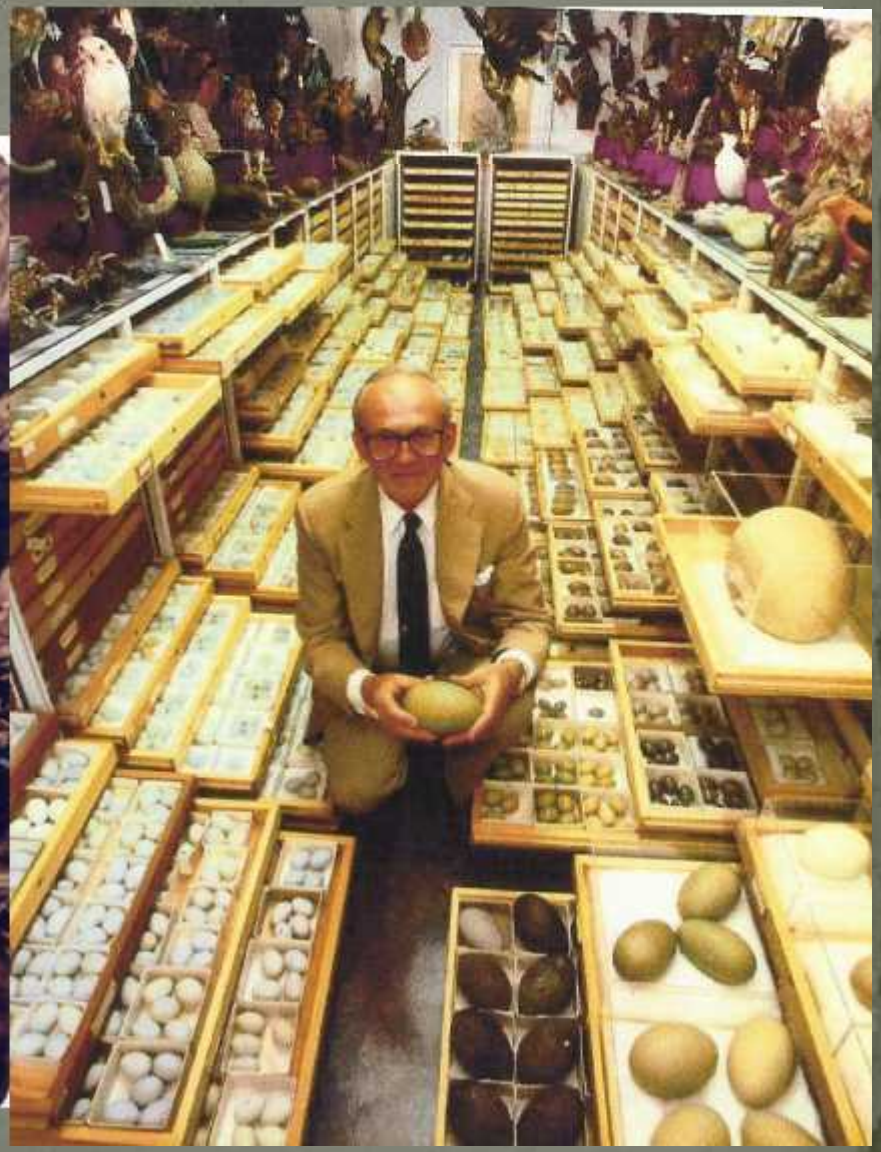
Ed N. Harrison (1914-2002). Founded the WFVZ in 1956.



Details about WFVZ

- More than 400 individual collections; ~300,000 sets
- More than 8,700 individual collectors
- Individual collections range in size from 1 egg set to >14,000 sets –
  - E.g., LSU (10,000), SDNHM (12,000), Patuxent (10,000), Philadelphia Academy of NS (8,000), Nelson Hoy (PA, 14,500 + 28,000 from the Norrises), Richard Etchecopar (FR, 7,000), Ed Harrison (11,000)

15 Largest North American Egg Collections	
Collection	# of egg sets as of 2013
Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology	300,000
Delaware MNH	36,700
Smithsonian	31,300
San Bernadino Museum	28,000
Field Museum of NH	21,000
American Museum of NH	16,000
Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, UC Berkeley	14,000
Royal Alberta Museum	14,000
University of Wisconsin, Green Bay	12,000
Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard	11,600
Royal Ontario Museum	11,300
Santa Barbara MNH	11,000
California Academy of Sciences	11,000
Florida Museum of NH, University of Florida	10,400
Carnegie MNH	9,930

Digitization/Modernization Accomplishments <2012:

- Entered basic data from 56,000 study skin labels
- Entered basic data from ~100,000 egg set records
- Photographed egg sets and nests of approx 750 species of birds breeding in the USA for Birds of North America online project

Data entry was primarily accomplished by volunteers and staff over a 10-year period.

In 2006, all digitized data were uploaded into Ornis, and were regularly updated thereafter.

In June 2012 The Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology was awarded a prestigious 3-year grant from the National Science Foundation for the digitization of more than 75,000 records of eggs of birds in the Order "Passeriformes" (the "Songbirds"). The WFVZ receives a large number of requests for information for these birds every year, for evaluations of historic and current bird distributions, breeding dates, clutch & egg sizes, & eggshell thicknesses. These data are used particularly in studies of climate change, environmental contamination, and phylogeny.

The NSF project has employed 25 undergraduate and recently-graduated Biology students, and young professionals who are in-between their undergraduate and graduate school educations. The students have been involved in various aspects of digitization of passerine records, including entering data from the original cards, scanning the cards, georeferencing egg sets, photographing eggs, relabeling and correcting problems with data entry and records, and reorganizing materials in the collection. All of the digitized data have been regularly uploaded and shared with the public and researchers via the Internet portals ORNIS, VertNet, GBIF, and iDigBio.

We have greatly enjoyed working with, teaching, and learning from all of the NSF data entry technicians who have made this project possible, and the WFVZ sincerely thanks them all! We have also thoroughly enjoyed introducing students to the professional museum world, bioinformatics, and ornithology, and hope to be able to continue such work in the near future!











National Science Foundation

Data Entry Technicians


Dustin Baker	Alaina Benham-Lipp		Mike Biscoe
Andrew Brinkman	Brittany Byrd	James Carey	Ryane Cox
Mimi Damwyk	Katie Dickins	Janet Garcia	Rebecca Gridley
Megan Hines	Amy Huffman	Lloyd Lustina	Susy Mateos
Lindsey Mercer	Nathan Monica	Duane Nash	Ryan Newkirk
Ivett Plascencia	Bryan Roth	Elizabeth Sayre	
Lindsey Sones	Megan Tyner	Christopher Walsh	











Accomplishments from 2012-2015 with NSF support:

- Part- and full-time data entry technicians scanned more than 83,000 Passerine egg and nest records;
- Captured data from 83,000 Passerine egg and nest records;
- Photographed 83,000 egg sets;
- And georeferenced 72,000 records.
- All data were uploaded regularly throughout the project into Ornis and Ornis2; VertNet; GBIF; and during the last year of the project, iDigBio
- All photos, scans, and data available for downloading through the WFVZ's website (coming shortly)

  - THANK YOU, NSF!!!

Current Needs at the WFVZ:

- Photographs of remainder of egg collection specimens (non-passerine sets; approximately 150,000)
- Photographs of nest collection specimens (20,000 specimens)
- Scanning of fieldnotes collection
- Climate-control infrastructure
- Walk-in freezer
- Laboratory upgrades for processing egg contents and tissues for contamination studies, and etc!