

CONTEXT

- The Buffalo Museum of Science is registered as 501(c)(3) not for profit.
- The staff at the Museum in charge of collections is composed of: Kathryn Leacock (Collections Director), Kacey Page (Collection Manager), Paige Langle (Full-time Collection Assistant) and Rebecca Klie (part-time Collection Assistant).
- There are no volunteers for the Division of Invertebrate Zoology nor a resident taxonomic expert in mollusks.
- The main mollusk collection is the “Imogene Robertson Collection”. It is a small but valuable mollusk collection; there are 22.5 cases of freshwater, marine and land mollusks. There are another 6 cases that contain a dry mollusk collection that have not been systematically incorporated into the Robertson collection.
- There are no current activities that focus on the mollusk collection. Also there is no online footprint of the mollusk collection. However, the Museum has been working with VertNet to publish ~2000 ornithological and ~150 herpetological data sets before the end of July 2017.

HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION

The Buffalo Society of Natural Science Conchological Section that dates back to 1897, was the responsible of collecting and classifying all mollusks that are part of the “Imogene Robertson Collection”. However some shell collection started as early as in the 1850’s. The first collections were made by naturalists and shell enthusiasts whom started gathering in their homes and at the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences building to share and identify their shells.

The Section extensively collected in the Niagara Region, but many members that traveled abroad contributed with shells from other parts of the U.S.A and from around the world. The collection made it to its final home in 1929 when the Society of Natural Science opened the Buffalo Museum of Science in its current location. The Conchological Section survived two world wars and the loss of many loved members.

The most comprehensive publication of the whole collection is *The Mollusca of the Niagara Frontier Region and Adjacent Territory* published in 1948, Vol. 19 no. 3 by Imogene C. Strickler Robertson and Clifford L. Blakeslee. After this publication, the collection has not being updated.

COLLECTION NEEDS

- The collection needs to be sorted out
- All records need to be entered to a computerized data base
- Taxonomy revision of all specimens
- Specimen labels and boxes need to be re-curated with acid-free archival-quality materials.

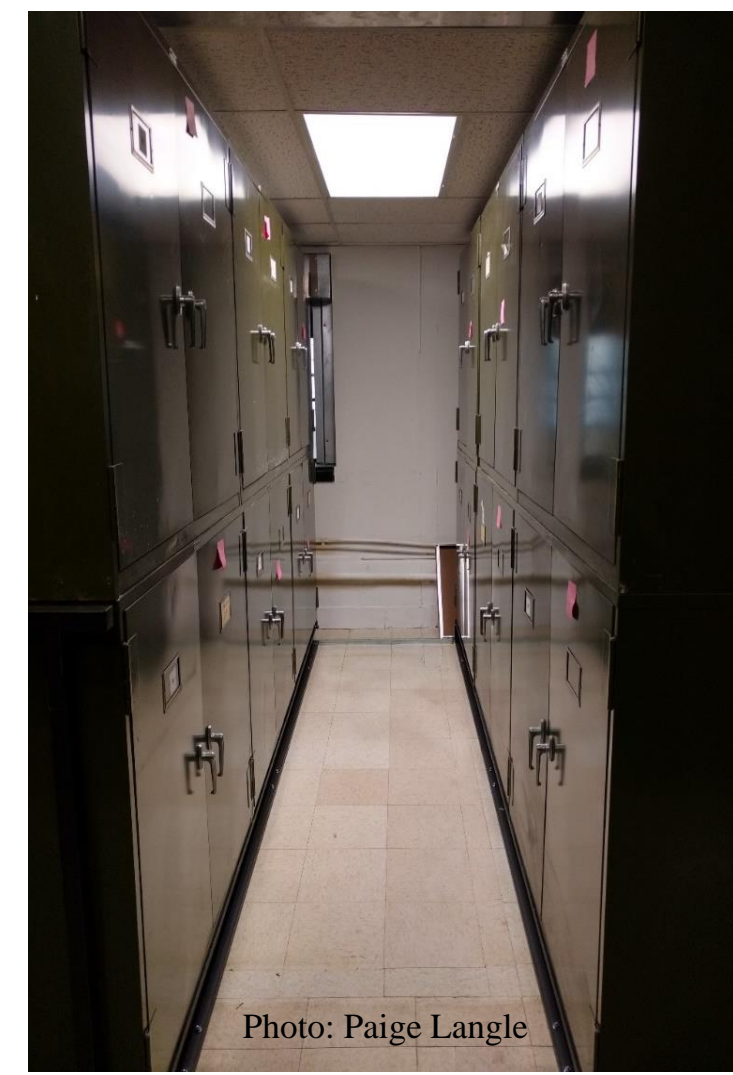


Photo: Paige Langle

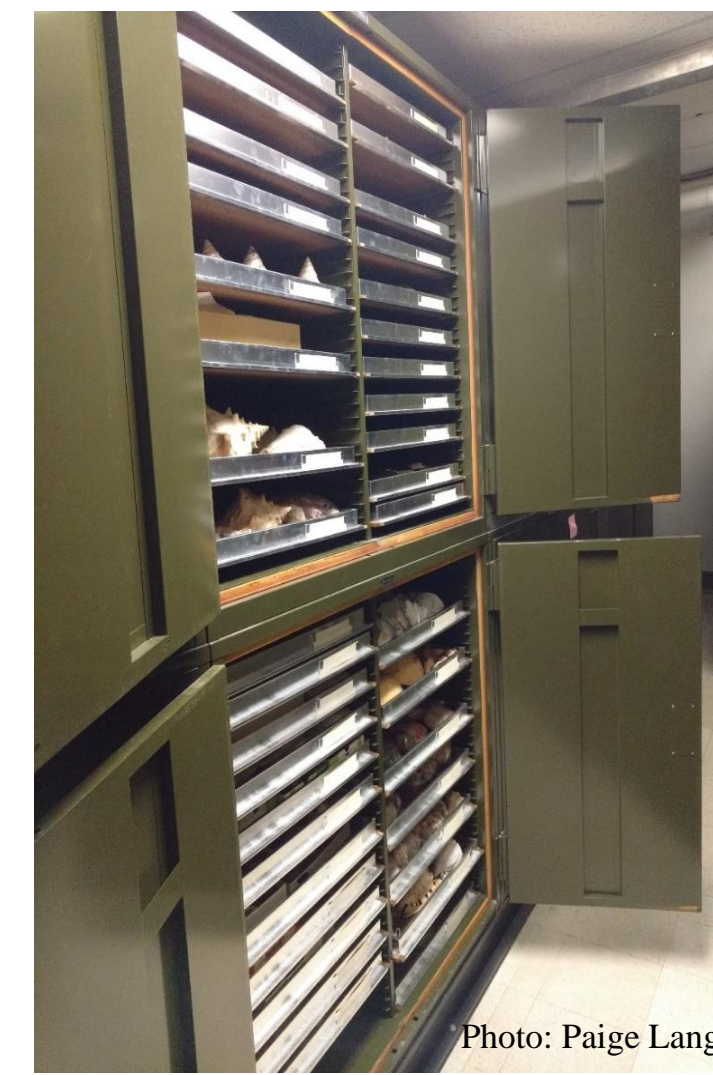


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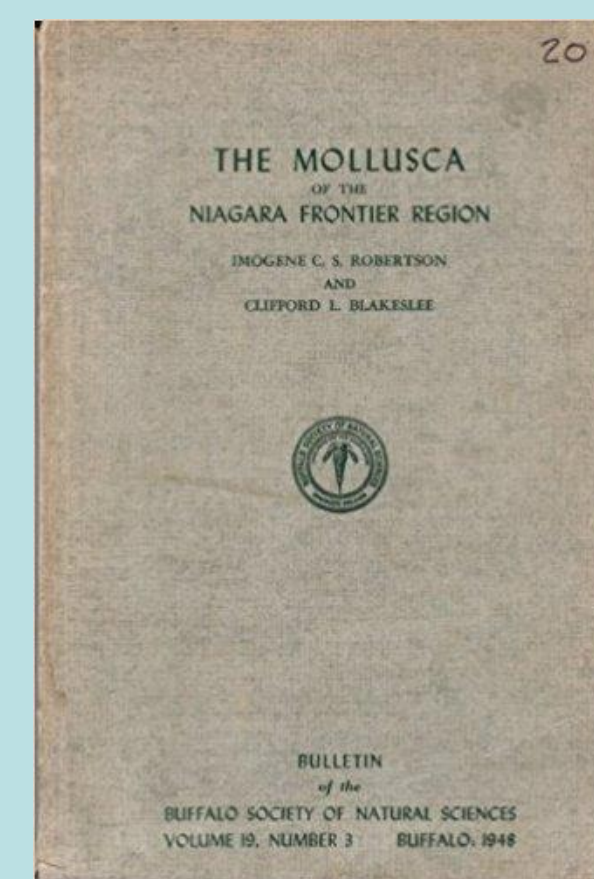
Imogene Robertson Collection

The Mollusca of the Niagara Frontier Region and other mollusk collections

- *The Mollusca of the Niagara Frontier Region and Adjacent Territory* is the only publication of the collection and includes 238 species of land and freshwater mollusk from the Niagara Region.
- The Conchological Section “*interest left no undiscovered local species in the area of and surrounding the city of Buffalo*” (Robertson, 1948)

A subsample of 817 marine bivalves and 1419 freshwater mussels came from >25 countries from all continents except Antarctica.

The collection also harbors a variety of gastropods from different habitats and from around the world



The *Imogene Robertson Collection* is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you are going to get. But you do know the box is full of delightful surprises.

