

UNIVERSITY *of* PENNSYLVANIA



The University Archives  
and Records Center

A Guide to the  
Department of Biology Records  
1869-1948 (bulk 1884-1916)

3.25 Cubic feet

UPB 1.9BIO

Prepared by J.M. Duffin  
August 2012

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**PROVENANCE**

The collection transferred to the University Archives in several parts, in the 1950s (1978:60) and 1996 (1996:86). The Botanical Garden images were transferred in May 2016 (2016:025) from the James G. Kaskey Memorial Garden.

**ARRANGEMENT**

The collection is organized into the following three series: Matriculation Records, 1884–1893; Faculty Minutes, 1884–1939; Reprints of Faculty Articles, 1869–1948. Every series is arranged alphabetically.

**HISTORICAL NOTE**

The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania authorized the establishment of a “Department of Biology” at the University in April 1884 and elected the founding members of its faculty one month

later. The faculty prepared a statement of purpose for the new Department, which the University published in its *Catalogue* for 1884 – 1885 and which is transcribed here,

The aim of this Department is –

1. To conduct the Biological studies of those students in the College Department who are pursuing the course in Philosophy.
2. To provide a course of instruction in Biology for students of both sexes who are preparing to study medicine, or who desire systematic training in this subject.
3. To afford advanced instruction to graduate students, candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
4. To encourage original research in Biology by offering facilities to scientists engaged in investigation, and by giving aid and instruction to advanced students prosecuting special work.

The University's Trustees and faculty acted swiftly to open the Department of Biology. funding for a new Laboratory Building, as it was first known, was assured in April 1884 and the design and construction of the new facility began in the late spring and continued rapidly to completion in December 1894. The Trustees formally named the new building "Biological Hall" (many years later, it was re-named "MacFarlane Hall") and turned it over to the seven-member faculty, headed by the famous Joseph Leidy, M.D. (1823 – 1891). Acknowledgment must be made to Horace Jayne, M.D. (1859 – 1913), who was the guiding intellect behind the plan for the new Department, as well as the largest contributor to the \$100,000 fund required for the design and construction of the Department's new building.

The Department of Biology offered a course of study which emphasized the study of Biology, Mammalian Anatomy, Botany, Zoology, Comparative Anatomy, Histology, Embryology, and Human and Comparative Physiology. The faculty offered instruction to both undergraduate and graduate students. In the first years of the Department, the faculty divided the academic program into three main areas:

Course in Philosophy (after 1889, Course in Natural History) – a four year course for undergraduate course for students enrolled in the College in which the last two years would be devoted to classes offered by the Department of Biology and which led to degree of Bachelor of Philosophy (after 1889, Bachelor of Science). This was open only to men since the College did not admit women at this time.

General Course in Biology – a two year program open to men and women who received all their instruction within the department and were given a certificate on completion of the program. This course was generally geared to students who wanted to continue to medical school and includes classes in chemistry, physics, zoology, mammalian and human anatomy, physiology, embryology, pathology and systematic affinities of plants

Instruction for Graduate Study – a special program which provided students (men and women) enrolled in the University's graduate school to earn a doctorate in the fields of botany and zoology.

In July 1894 the University's Trustees authorized the Department of Biology to establish a four-year course leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Biology. This program was offered to both men and women, in many ways modeled on the similar course already established in the Department of Chemistry.

In its first decade, the Department of Biology acted largely independently of the College Department, in part due to its special standing in offering programs in pure and experimental science and its admission of both men and women. Indeed, for the years from 1889 and 1894 the University recognized the faculty of the department as the "School of Biology," a standing which reflected its semi-autonomous status. Publishing two science journals, *Contributions from the Botanical Laboratory* and *Contributions from the Zoological Laboratory of University of Pennsylvania*, beginning in 1892 reflected the unique position the department held at the University. In 1894 and later years, however, the University administration, under the direction of Provost Charles Custis Harrison, developed a more centralized governance structure. The School of Biology was then re-named a department and was more fully integrated into the governance structure of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Changes and expansion of the Department's constituent academic disciplines led, in 1897, to the creation of new departments of botany and zoology. The new departments worked together under the title of "Biological Group Committee" and had power to establish curricula and rules regarding requirements for graduation, primarily for graduate students. In 1913 the separation of the two new departments became permanent with the establishment of a Botany Group Committee and a Zoological Group Committee, which were faculty committees that governed their own fields of study independently.

It was not until 1957 that the name biology resurfaced as a field of study at the University of Pennsylvania. There had been some discussion in the Department of Botany since 1952 of merging with the Department of Zoology lead primarily by David R. Goddard (1908 – 1985). A committee was formed in 1956 to examine the idea and the respective departments approved of the plan in

1957 to create a Division of Biological Sciences. During Goddard's term as University Provost, the merger became complete in 1963 with the creation of the Department of Biology which exists to this day in the contemporary School of Arts and Sciences (SAS).

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

This collection documents the early history and development of the Department of Biology and the teaching of botany and zoology at the University of Pennsylvania until 1916. Information regarding the curriculum and standing of students is found in the two volumes faculty minutes. The composition of the early student body is illustrated in the matriculation book and the breadth of study of the early faculty members is found in the reprints and articles series. The photograph series contains six images from glass negatives of the original Botanical Garden, ca. 1894.

The major curriculum decisions and student reviews for the Department of Biology from 1894 to 1912 can be found in the Academic Council Minutes (UPB 1.21). The academic record of students enrolled in this program after 1889 are found in the records of the College of Arts and Sciences (UPB 1.45).

The following is a list of related collections concerning the early activities of students and faculty members of the Department of Biology: Biological Club Records, 1888 – 1901, UPS 45.2 Journal Club of the Biological Department, 1889, UPS 45.2 Naturalists Field Club of the University of Pennsylvania Records, 1890 – 1942, UPS 45.4 Merkel Henry Jacobs Papers, 1911 – 1962, UPT50 J17 John William Harshberger Papers, 1886 – 1929, UPT50 H313

### **CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS**

#### **Corporate Name(s)**

- University of Pennsylvania. Dept. of Botany.
- University of Pennsylvania. Dept. of Zoology.
- University of Pennsylvania. School of Biology.

**Subject(s)**

- Biology--Study and teaching (Higher)
- Botany--Study and teaching (Higher)
- Zoology--Study and teaching (Higher)



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**INVENTORY**

<b>MATRICULATION RECORDS</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
1884-1893. Lists date, name, post office, state, session, city residence, previous education and remarks. Cardboard covers with leather spine and corners.	1	
<b>FACULTY MINUTES</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Department of Biology 9 May 1884-11 May 1887	2	1
Biological Committee (Group 15) of the Department of Philosophy (Graduate School) 4 May 1897-12 March 1915	2	2
Biological Conference Meeting 1916	2	3
Professorial Staff of the Department of Zoology, Report to the Advisory Committee on Zoology, recommending William Frey Diller, etc. for faculty positions March 1939	2	4
<b>REPRINTS OF FACULTY ARTICLES</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Binney, W. G., and T. Bland, Land and Fresh Water Shells of North America, Part I, <i>Pulmonata Geophila</i> 1869	3	2
Cope, E. D., The Batrachia of North America ( <i>Bulletin of the United States National Museum</i> , N. 34) 1889	3	3
Jordan, David S., and Charles H. Gilbert, Synopsis of the Fishes of North America, ( <i>Bulletin of the United States National Museum</i> , No. 16) 1882	3	4

Various Authors

(1) 1893-1899	2	4
(2) 1908-1915	2	5
(3) 1922-1948	3	1

<b>PHOTOGRAPHS</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Botanical Garden, north end looking west with gardeners cottage and some of the earliest beds ca. 1894	4	1
Botanical Garden, with gardener's cottage, Botany Hall, and Quad ca. 1894	4	2
Botanical Garden, northwest side showing original greenhouse off Botany Hall ca. 1894	4	3
Botanical Garden, original pond ca. 1894	4	4
Botanical Garden, southside looking northwest with gardener's cottage, Botany Hall and Quad visible ca. 1894	4	5
Botanical Garden, Botany Hall east side looking west with two glass houses attached, and Quad ca. 1894	4	6