

The Malacological Collections Histories project: a preface

Welcome to this special edition of our journal. This issue brings together the historical accounts of fifteen major museum-based molluscan collections in the U.S., in addition to an introductory article prepared by curators, collection managers, and collection associates involved in the project. Throughout its 139-year existence, *The Nautilus* has endeavored to promote collection-based malacological research, so it is only natural that the journal would be the vehicle to disseminate this “historical” compilation. The articles are an outcome of the National Science Foundation-sponsored Thematic Collections Network (TCN) grants collectively known as *Mobilizing Millions of Mollusks of the Eastern Seaboard* (ESB). Each tells the story of an institutional mollusk collection from its earliest days to its present involvement in community-wide efforts. The introductory article reflects on the changing roles of U.S. malacological collections in a digital world, summarizes common needs and concerns, and points to the uniqueness and innovative nature of the ESB project. The editors want to acknowledge the indispensable assistance of the following peer reviewers, many of whom reviewed more than one manuscript in the course of this work: Arthur E. Bogan, Christopher Boyko, Eugene V. Coan, Kevin Cummings, Emilio F. García, Daniel Graf, Lindsey Groves, M. G. Harasewych, Alan Kabat, Rafael Lemaitre, Charles Lydeard, Paula M. Mikkelsen, Aydin Örstan, Shirley Pomponi, Carrie Schweitzer, Elizabeth K. Shea, Leslie Skibinski, John Slapcinsky, Ángel Valdés, and some others who preferred to remain anonymous. This assemblage of historical accounts could only come to fruition thanks to the cooperative and collegial environment of the ESB consortium; we hope that you find as much enjoyment reading these narratives as we did organizing and editing them. Support for this publication under National Science Foundation award DBI-2001510 is gratefully acknowledged.

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