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## **The Arcadia Fund Awards Grant to Support The Field Book Project**

The Smithsonian Libraries received a \$511,200 grant from the [Arcadia Fund](#) for [The Field Book Project](#) to provide free, online access to the Smithsonian's field books on biodiversity research. Over a two-year period, the grant will support the cataloging of 2,000 field books and the digitization of 2,600 field books, which will be made openly available via multiple platforms, including the Smithsonian's [Collection Search Center](#) and the [Biodiversity Heritage Library](#).

The Smithsonian holds thousands of field books documenting the flora, fauna and ecosystems of the world. Launched in 2010, The Field Book Project is a collaboration to improve access to these field notes and other primary source documentation of field research related to biodiversity. As primary sources, field books are not only unique as material objects, but many also contain unique information on species and ecosystems – information that may be unpublished and unavailable through other sources.

The Smithsonian Libraries, the Smithsonian Institution Archives, the Biodiversity Heritage Library and the National Museum of Natural History will work closely together to conduct conservation reviews, catalog, digitize and provide open access to the natural history field books at the Smithsonian. "Bringing these works together with the published literature means we can begin to fill some of these information gaps to better understand ecosystem changes and the context behind the research. Such knowledge can empower scientists, regional and national leaders and others to develop strategies for addressing biodiversity loss," said Martin Kalfatovic, program director of the Biodiversity Heritage Library.

The work of initiatives like The Field Book Project directly relates to the Smithsonian's grand challenge of broadening access to collections. "Original field notes are often hidden in larger collections of archival material and are difficult to find," said Anne Van Camp, director of the Smithsonian Institution Archives. "Information contained in field books tells the stories of exploration, discovery and collecting events that have shaped our understanding of the natural world. The notes also provide deep insight into the personal nature of those individuals that first encountered the vast

biodiversity across the Earth. Providing access to this information allows researchers to further understand the history of scientific exploration and to relate that past to the present.”

### **About Arcadia**

Arcadia is the charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin. Since its inception in 2001, Arcadia has awarded more than \$331 million in grants. Arcadia works to protect endangered culture and nature. For more information, visit [www.arcadiahfund.org.uk](http://www.arcadiahfund.org.uk).

### **About the Smithsonian Libraries**

The Smithsonian Libraries maintains a collection of more than 2 million volumes and serves as an educational resource for the Smithsonian Institution, the global research community and the public. The Libraries are located in Washington, Edgewater, Md., New York City and the Republic of Panama. For more information, visit the Smithsonian Libraries website: <http://library.si.edu>.

### **About the Smithsonian Institution Archives**

The Smithsonian Institution Archives captures, preserves and makes available to the public the history of Smithsonian. From its inception in 1846 to the present, the records of the history of the Institution—its people, its programs, its research and its stories—have been gathered, organized and disseminated so that everyone can learn about the Smithsonian. The history of the Smithsonian is a vital part of American history, of scientific exploration and of international cultural understanding. Learn more about the Archives at [siarchives.si.edu](http://siarchives.si.edu).

### **About the Biodiversity Heritage Library**

The Biodiversity Heritage Library is a consortium of major natural history, botanical and research libraries that seek to contribute to the global “biodiversity commons” by digitizing and aggregating the resources housed within each of the participating institutions, providing free and open access to the legacy literature that underpins the work of the natural science community. For more information, visit the [Biodiversity Heritage Library website](http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org).

### **About the National Museum of Natural History**

The Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History welcomed more than 7 million visitors in 2014, making it one of the most-visited museums in the world. Opened in 1910, the museum on the National Mall is dedicated to maintaining and preserving the world’s most extensive collection of natural history specimens and human artifacts. It also fosters significant scientific research and educational programs and exhibitions that present the work of its scientists to the public.

The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (closed Dec. 25). Admission is free. For more information, visit the museum on its [website](#) and on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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