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## **Alden H. Miller papers**

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UC Berkeley. Museum of Vertebrate Zoology

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## **Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** Alden H. Miller papers

**Dates:** 1913-1965

**Collection Number:** MVZ.MSS.0189

**Creator/Collector:** Miller, Alden H. (Alden Holmes), 1906-1965

**Extent:** 2.0 cubic feet

**Repository:** UC Berkeley. Museum of Vertebrate Zoology  
Berkeley, California 94720-3160

**Abstract:** The Alden H. Miller papers collection consists of field notes, catalogues, manuscripts, specimen data, and photographs. The collection contains 21 bound volumes of field notes between the years 1930 and 1965 and numerous other field notes, diaries, and catalogues ranging between 1913 and 1946. The collection mainly covers ornithological work done across the Western United States, and also includes field notes from South America, El Salvador, New Guinea, Jamaica, and the Galapagos.

**Language of Material:** English

### **Access**

The collection is open for research.

### **Publication Rights**

Copyright restrictions may apply. All requests to publish, quote, or reproduce must be submitted to the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology Archives in writing for approval. Please contact the Museum Archivist for further information.

### **Preferred Citation**

Alden H. Miller papers. UC Berkeley. Museum of Vertebrate Zoology

### **Biography/Administrative History**

Alden Holmes Miller, born 1906, was raised in Los Angeles and attended both UCLA (1927) and UC Berkeley (1930), where he received his Ph.D under Joseph Grinnell, the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology's first director. His early interest in zoology came from his father, Professor Loye H. Miller, who was a lifelong inspiration. Other major influences on his life and research were: Bennet Allen, Professor of Zoology at UCLA; Joseph Grinnell, Alden's mentor professor at Berkeley; and Virginia Dove Miller, his wife and research associate. Alden H. Miller was one of the first individuals to hold a joint appointment in the Department of Zoology and the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. At the MVZ he first served as Assistant Curator of Birds, and assumed the directorship of the Museum upon Grinnell's death in 1939. Miller remained as the Museum's Director and leading ornithologist from the end of the Grinnell era until his death in 1965, during which time he mentored countless students to academic success. During his career Miller published 259 papers and is recognized for his noteworthy monographic studies on the analyses of speciation in two avian genera: *Lanius* (shrikes) and *Junco* (sparrow-like birds). Of the experimental work done by Miller his papers on physiological and behavioral responses of crowned sparrows to artificially altered length of day are the most important. Alden H. Miller received many honors in his career including the Brewster Award of the American Ornithologists' Union, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and an election to the National Academy of Sciences. Administratively, in addition to the directorship of the MVZ, Miller held such posts at Berkeley as Assistant Dean, College of Letters and Science; Chairman, Budget Committee; Chairman, Board of Research; Acting Chairman, Department of Paleontology; and Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs. He also served as the both the associate editor and editor of *The Condor* from 1932 until his death in 1965. References "MVZ Biographies." Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at Berkeley. 22 July 2013. <http://mvz.berkeley.edu/Biographies.html>. University of California Academic Senate. "1967, University of California: In Memoriam, Alden Holmes Miller, Zoology, Berkeley." California Digital Library (Calisphere). 1967. Web. 22 July 2013. <http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=hb629006vt&brand=calisphere>.

### **Scope and Content of Collection**

The Alden H. Miller papers collection consists of field notes, catalogues, manuscripts, specimen data, and photographs. The collection contains 21 bound volumes of field notes between the years 1930 and 1965 and numerous other field notes, diaries, and catalogues ranging between 1913 and 1946. In addition to several bird catalogues and nest and egg data, the collection contains notes on Miller's Captive Experiments at Berkeley and notes on caged birds. There are also five small photographs of Condors along with Miller's specimen notes. The collection mainly covers ornithological work done across the Western United States, and also includes field notes from South America, El Salvador, New Guinea, Jamaica, and the Galapagos. The collection is 2.0 cubic feet.

### **Indexing Terms**

Birds--California--Identification

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University of California (1868-1952). Museum of Vertebrate Zoology

[Alden Miller box list](#)

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