Finding Aid to the Ethel Bailey Higgins Papers, ca. 1933-1963 LA.1994.0414

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1994-04-14
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Abstract: The Ethel Bailey Higgins Papers consists of botanical research material including plant lists, correspondence, and manuscript material assembled by Higgins during her tenure as curator of botany at the San Diego Natural History Museum.

Language of Material: English

Scope and Contents
The Ethel Bailey Higgins Papers, ca. 1933-1963, consist of three boxes of archival materials relating to Higgins' career at the San Diego Natural History Museum as Curator of Botany. Series I consists of manuscript material (draft and final) regarding plant collectors of San Diego; Series II contains bundles of plant lists; Series 3 consist of correspondence.

Biographical/Historical
Ethel Bailey Higgins (1866–1963) was the curator of botany at the San Diego Natural History Museum from 1943 to 1957 and associate curator from 1957 to 1963. Higgins is the author of Our Native Cacti (1931), Annotated Distributional List of the Ferns and Flowering Plants of San Diego County, California (1949), and other popular works on plants of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. Born Ethel Phoebe Bailey in Vassalboro, Maine on May 10, 1866, she moved to Los Angeles, California with her parents in 1900, where she worked as a photographer, specializing in botanical subjects. She married John C. Higgins in 1914, and the couple moved to San Diego in 1915; that year, she exhibited photographs during the Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park. She joined the San Diego Natural History Museum staff in 1933 and became Curator of Botany in 1943 succeeding Frank Gander. In 1957, she was succeeded as curator by Reid Moran and continued her work with the Museum as associate curator into her mid-90s. Higgins died on March 9, 1963 in San Diego, California.

Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open to researchers by appointment. Contact the Research Library Director, San Diego Natural History Museum.

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Preferred Citation

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Manuscripts for publication
Natural history -- California -- San Diego County
Women botanists -- San Diego County (Calif.) -- Archival resources
Eastwood, Alice, 1859-1953
Orcutt, Charles Russell, 1864-1929

Box 81
Series I. Manuscript material 1950-1960
Physical Description: 1.0 Linear Feet
Scope and Contents
Plant Collectors of Baja to 1958, original manuscript (draft and final). Includes correspondence and notes created in preparation of book.

Box 207
Series II. Plant lists
Physical Description: 1.0 Linear Feet
Scope and Contents
15+ bundles. Approximately 40 inches of 3 x 5 in cards of plant lists, assembled by Higgins. Also includes rolls of typescript lists and a 1947 issue of McLean's Medical Almanac.
Box 303

**Series III. Correspondence ca. 1914-1956**

**Physical Description:** 0.25 Linear Feet

**Scope and Contents**

4 folders. Contains correspondence, 1914-1956. Includes letters to Higgins from Alice Eastwood, 1945-1947 and correspondence regarding the Orcutt, San Diego post office and books found by Charles Russell Orcutt at Dominican monasteries in Baja California.