



Harriet Exeline Frizzell (1909-1968)

Biographical Sketch by Hany Abdoun, Archives Intern

Harriet Exeline was born on May 8, 1909 in Walla Walla, Washington. In 1930 she received her B.A. in Biology from Reed College, Portland, Oregon. She received her M.S. in 1932 and her Ph.D. in 1936, both in Zoology and both from the University of Washington, Seattle. Immediately after obtaining her Ph.D., she became the first woman to receive the Sterling Fellowship at Yale to pursue post-doctoral research in arachnology. She focused her research on spiders, micropaleontology and pycnogonids, or sea spiders.

While at the University of Washington, she was a Teaching Fellow in the Department of Zoology in 1931. In 1936 she became an Assistant Professor. In 1938 she moved with her husband, Donald Frizzell, to Peru and Ecuador to do independent research on spiders. She returned to the University of Washington in 1943 and became an Instructor of Zoology. She was a Guest Researcher in Spiders in the Department of Zoology at the University of Texas from 1945 until 1948, when she moved to Rolla, Missouri, to conduct independent research. From 1960 to 1967, she was Taxonomist and Consultant for a National Science Foundation project in spider biology, conducted at the University of Arkansas. Dr. Frizzell, a fellow of the California Academy of Sciences since 1957, was also a Research Associate of the Academy's Entomology Department from 1958 to 1968.

Dr. Frizzell was a member of many scientific organizations including, the American Society of Zoologists and the Society of Systematic Zoology. Dr. Harriet Exeline Frizzell, a leading authority on American spiders, died in February 1968.

Sources Consulted:

Academy Newsletter, February, 1974.

Obituary, 1968.