



Frederick William Nunenmacher (1870-1946)

Biographical Sketch by Hany Abdoun, Archives Intern

Frederick William Nunenmacher was born on March 28, 1870, in Oakland, California. As a young boy he helped his father in his garden and nursery business, a profession he enjoyed and continued until his death. Although he had little schooling, Nunenmacher developed an interest in collecting natural history specimens at an early age. He was encouraged by entomologist Albert Koebele to concentrate on a small group of insects that interested him the most. At once, he limited his collecting to Coleoptera, specializing on the Coccinellidae (a genus of small beetles such as ladybugs).

His first trip out of California was in 1906 to Arizona, where he spent three months collecting with Koebele. In 1911 he made one of his most difficult collecting trips by starting 50 miles south of Eureka, California, and finishing in Grant's Pass, Oregon. The distance walked by Nunenmacher in this trip totaled 275 miles. For three months in 1913, he traveled through Shasta County, California, as far as Lakeview, Oregon and returned by way of Lassen County and Lake Tahoe. For two months in 1914, Nunenmacher traveled through the Yosemite Valley region and as the automobile became widespread and stronger, he conducted several short trips in California, Oregon and Arizona.

Nunenmacher was said to be a good carpenter, brick mason, plumber, plasterer, painter and homebuilder. At one point in his life, Nunenmacher was a volunteer fireman, a delegate to political conventions, a Deputy Sheriff and a City Gardener of Piedmont. He was also a member of the Pacific Coast Entomological Society.

Frederick William Nunenmacher died on April 29, 1946, in his Piedmont home. Part of his Coccinellidae collection, consisting of 2,100 species and 15,000 specimens, was purchased and presented to the Entomology Department of the California Academy of Sciences in 1947.

Sources Consulted:

Pan Pacific Entomologist, Vol. 24, No. 1, January 1948

San Francisco Chronicle, February 19, 1940