

assistance with identifications is requested of an institution but the collection is to be deposited elsewhere, the requester should offer at least to deposit representative material in the institution that provides the service.

Donors often expect institutions to maintain a voucher collection as a discrete unit, separate from the main collection. This desire is understandable, but most institutions cannot accommodate such requests, because of limited space and curatorial support. Whether a voucher collection should be maintained in a single institution or distributed among several is also debated. Each option has merit. The first obviously simplifies future study of the collection; the latter provides for greater access by researchers in many areas. Donors concerned about this issue should ask about an institution's exchange policy before depositing specimens there.

Permits

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During the past few decades, the number of laws regulating the collection, acquisition, study, transport, and disposition of wildlife and wildlife products has increased significantly. These laws have been proposed and promulgated in an effort to control activities that are deemed harmful to animals and plants. Although habitat loss generally is acknowledged to be the primary factor affecting species' distributions, abundances, recruitment, and extinctions, commercial exploitation also has had a detrimental effect on certain species of wildlife.

Some species considered to be endangered, threatened, or otherwise in need of protection have been protected by international treaty (e.g., Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora [CITES]), or

various federal (Federal Register 1973, 1995, and published amendments), state, and local laws. Additional regulations are stipulated by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. The laws and regulations contained in the U.S. Endangered Species Act and in CITES are those of primary concern, but many other foreign, federal, state, and local regulations may also apply to users of this manual. Many states, for example, require permits for the use of traps; permission to use such devices to sample mammals should be clarified with the local authority. Other regulations with which travelers should be familiar restrict the transport of liquid nitrogen, alcohol, and formalin, or the possession and transport of syringes and certain killing agents, drugs, or chemicals used in specimen preparation.

Laws regulating scientific collecting vary widely among states and countries and change constantly. Furthermore, the government agencies responsible for issuing collecting permits sometimes change or are restructured. Current information on most international and federal regulations and responsible agencies can be obtained by writing to or calling the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Management Authority (4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203 USA; telephone: 703-358-1708). Interpretations of laws and regulations designed to protect animals in the United States are provided in the Code of Federal Regulations (1973, 1979) and a report from the National Research Council (1985). Information on state and local regulations can be obtained from the appropriate conservation or management agency in the jurisdiction of interest. The variation in requirements often makes obtaining collecting and export permits a trying process. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the individual collector to learn about and comply with the relevant regulations as they apply to mammals. Although certain provisions of a collecting permit may appear to have little bearing on the conservation of species

or protection of habitats and in some instances may even restrict the conduct of scientific research, all of us are obliged to abide by the regulations.

Because obtaining the necessary permits is a crucial step in ensuring the success of a field study and often is the most difficult part of the preliminary work, it is essential that the investigator present a carefully planned proposal with clearly defined objectives to the permit-granting agency. We recommend that investigators be prepared for delays, which often are inevitable, by allowing a long lead time between the request for permits and the initiation of the field study.

Most institutions cannot or will not accept voucher material unless it is accompanied by documents verifying that the specimens were legally collected and, where appropriate, exported and imported. In many countries, permits for specimen collection and export are issued by different government agencies. In addition, some countries require an animal health permit, issued by a third agency, before specimens can be legally exported. In other countries collection and export, at least for noncommercial purposes, are unregulated. In these cases, a letter on official stationery from the most appropriate government agency stating that such permits are not required may suffice for purposes of importation.

Endangered and protected species require special permits beyond the normal collecting and export permits. In addition, in CITES-member countries, export permits for any species covered by CITES must be issued by the desig-

nated CITES official. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see address given previously) maintains an international directory of CITES Management Authorities, that is, of offices authorized to issue permits or equivalent documentation in accordance with CITES regulations. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that he or she has complied with all laws governing the collection and export of scientific specimens and to secure the appropriate permits.

For import into the United States, a completed Fish and Wildlife Service form 3-177 (available from a Fish and Wildlife Service agent at a designated port of entry or from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Law Enforcement, P.O. Box 3247, Arlington, VA 22203-3247 USA) accompanied by the above documents (copies are sufficient) from the country of origin must be presented at the port of entry. It is prudent to notify the agent at the port of entry of your anticipated date and time of arrival. If it is not possible to meet with a Fish and Wildlife agent at the time of arrival, the completed 3-177 form should be left with the customs inspector and a copy sent to the address specified on the form within the specified time. For purposes of declaration, scientific specimens, by definition, have "no commercial value." Importation of specimens into countries other than the United States and shipments through other countries will require other permits. In these instances local agencies should be consulted for information regarding regulations and appropriate procedures.