

AUTUMN LECTURE COURSE BEGINS OCTOBER 4

Field Museum's fifty-fourth free lecture course will begin on October 4. Nine lectures on science and travel, illustrated with motion pictures and stereopticon slides, will be given by eminent explorers and naturalists, in the James Simpson Theatre of the Museum on successive Saturday afternoons, the series ending on November 29.

All lectures will begin at 3 P.M. Admission is free. Following is the complete schedule of dates, subjects and speakers:

October 4—Picturesque Japan

Horace E. Coleman, Chicago (a resident of Japan for more than twenty years)

October 11—Primitive Tribes of Angola, Portuguese West Africa

Wilfrid D. Hambly, Assistant Curator of African Ethnology, Field Museum; Leader, Frederick H. Rawson—Field Museum Ethnological Expedition to West Africa

October 18—Botanical Collecting along the Upper Amazon

Llewelyn Williams, Assistant in Wood Technology, Field Museum; Leader, Marshall Field Botanical Expedition to Peru

October 25—Madagascar and Her People

Dr. Ralph Linton, Professor of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin (Leader, Marshall Field Ethnological Expedition to Madagascar)

November 1—On Horseback to the Glacial Age

Walter L. Payne, Department of Public Instruction, Washington, D. C.

November 8—Archaeological Explorations in the Maya Field and a Description of the Aztec and Maya Hieroglyphic Writings

Dr. Sylvanus G. Morley, Carnegie Institution of Washington

November 15—Will Insects Displace Man?

Brayton Eddy, Providence, R. I.

November 22—Siam and Indo-China

H. C. Ostrander, Yonkers, N. Y.

November 29—With Pinchot in the South Seas

Howard Cleaves, Pinchot South Sea Expedition

No tickets are necessary for admission to these lectures.

GIANT PREHENSILE-TAILED SKINK ON EXHIBITION

BY KARL P. SCHMIDT
Assistant Curator of Reptiles

To one familiar with prehensile tails only as a peculiarity of monkeys and opossums it is at first surprising to learn that this useful adaptation to climbing has also been acquired by certain lizards. Two American lizards, one in Jamaica and one in Colombia, both belonging to the iguanid family, employ their tails in true monkey fashion. The only other lizard with a prehensile tail is found on the other side of the world, in the Solomon Islands, and it represents an entirely different family of lizards—the skinks.

This prehensile-tailed skink (*Corucia zebrata* Gray) of the Solomons is a much larger lizard than either of the American species. It reaches a length of more than two feet. Its perfectly flexible and strongly prehensile tail is the more remarkable in that other members of its family all have fragile tails, and all the skinks are encased in a bony armor underlying the scales.

These Solomon Island lizards live an arboreal life, rarely descending to the ground. They inhabit hollow trees, in which they are somewhat gregarious, three or four specimens being found in a single hollow. They climb sluggishly about, feeding on the leaves of the forest trees. They are well known to the natives who use them for food.

A reproduction has been made of a fine specimen of this species of skink which was

brought from Ysabel Island in the Solomon group by the Cornelius Crane Pacific Expedition of Field Museum in 1929. This reproduction has just been placed on exhibition in Albert W. Harris Hall (Hall 18). It is an excellent example of the extremely life-like cellulose-acetate models made according to the process invented and perfected by Leon L. Walters of Field Museum's taxidermy staff. This process makes possible better preparations of certain animals, such



Giant Skink

Reproduction of giant prehensile-tailed skink, obtained by Cornelius Crane Pacific Expedition of Field Museum, and now on exhibition in Albert W. Harris Hall (Hall 18).

as reptiles, and hairless mammals of the hippopotamus and rhinoceros type, than can be accomplished by mounting the skin.

A MODERN HORSE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE MESOHIPPUS

An amusing incident of a modern horse's reaction upon encountering a restoration of one of his tiny three-toed predecessors of some thirty million years ago is told by Frederick Blaschke, the sculptor who created the Mesohippus group recently installed in Ernest R. Graham Hall of the Museum.

Mr. Blaschke has a studio on a farm-like estate near Cold Spring-on-Hudson, N. Y. After completing one of the small prehistoric horse figures (about the size of an average collie dog in accordance with Mesohippus fossil skeletons) he placed it on a grassy patch to test out its appearance against a rural background.

An old farm horse belonging to Mr. Blaschke eyed his master's work suspiciously. In the past this horse had completely ignored other domestic animals, and also the deer and other wild animals which occasionally come up to the edge of the estate. But, says Mr. Blaschke, the representation of his remote relative excited unusual interest on the horse's part, and he approached cautiously to inspect it closer. When Mr. Blaschke pretended to pet the model the live horse snorted with jealousy. Finally he ran up close as though bent on destroying this alienator of his master's affections, but stopped suddenly and then ran away as if in fear. There seemed to be no doubt, Mr. Blaschke says, that the horse recognized Mesohippus as a member of his own family.

Flora of the Indiana Dunes: a handbook published by Field Museum, containing the only available complete list with descriptions of the 1,400 flowers found in the Dunes. Illustrated. Now on sale—price \$2.00.

THE RAYMOND FOUNDATION PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

The autumn series of free motion pictures for children given at Field Museum under the provisions of the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures, will begin Saturday, October 4. Programs will be presented twice each Saturday morning, at 10 and 11 o'clock, from that date until and including December 6. All the entertainments will be given in the James Simpson Theatre of the Museum.

Following is the complete schedule:

October 4—Friend Snail; Drifting Dunes; The Silver Swimmer; Undersea Life; Nesting of the Sea Turtle.

October 11—Columbus (film presented by the late Chauncey Keep); Lions on the Rocks.

October 18—The Story of Petroleum (lecture illustrated with motion pictures); Musquash the Muskrat.

October 25—Hungarian Farmers; Our Daily Bread; The Coon Hunt.

November 1—In Mexico; Enamelware; The Last of the Seminoles; A Four-footed Columbus.

November 8—Trees to Tribunes; Totem Tales; Sacred Baboons.

November 15—How a Volcano Works; Active Volcano in Hawaii; Aloha Land; The Cobra and the Mongoose; Strange Animal Habits.

November 22—Beautiful Corsica; A Persian Wedding; Egypt, Old and New; The Taj Mahal.

November 29—The Puritans; Peter Stuyvesant (films presented by the late Chauncey Keep).

December 6—On the Trail of the Dik Dik; The Stork; Castles of Paper; Winter Pep.

Children from all parts of Chicago and suburbs are invited to attend these programs.

CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Field Museum has made the James Simpson Theatre available to Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge for the purpose of giving a Festival of Chamber Music, from October 12 to 16 inclusive. The Museum, however, does not participate in any way in the management of the concerts, which are entirely under the sponsorship of Mrs. Coolidge, who is well-known for her long continued and generous support of the cause of chamber music.

While part of the theatre is reserved for guests invited by Mrs. Coolidge, a number of seats will be available to others, and may be obtained by application to Miss Ruth Hughes, Room 650 Orchestra Hall, 220 South Michigan Avenue (telephone Harrison 0363).

The concerts on October 12, 14 and 16 will begin at 8:30 P.M.; those on October 13 and 15 at 3:30 P.M. All persons attending the evening concerts must use the West Door of the Museum for admission, and non-Members of the Museum must use that door also for the afternoon concerts. As the Museum's closing hour in October is 5 P.M. no part of the building other than the Theatre may be visited after the concerts.

Zoologist from India

Dr. Baini Prasad, Director of the Zoological Survey of India, Indian Museum, Calcutta, recently visited Field Museum and made notes on methods employed here in the preparation of exhibits.



1930. "A Modern Horse's Attitude Toward the Meshippus." *Field Museum news* 1(10), 3-3.

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