

FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

ROOSEVELT ROAD AND LAKE MICHIGAN
CHICAGO

January 29, 1940

Dear Mr. Ames:

The other day I received from Mr. Correll a letter in which he expressed a desire to go to Guatemala this year to collect orchids and other plants, and I understand he has written you regarding the matter.

I believe that I wrote you some time ago regarding the possibilities of the wet Pacific forest of western Guatemala as a source of orchids. There is abundant dense forest there, and moisture throughout the year. The orchids are a little higher off the ground than in Costa Rica, and there can't be so many species, but I am sure there are a good many of them. In order to collect orchids, as you know better than I, it requires a great deal of patience and special attention such as is not practical when making general collections. Last year I collected all I found close at hand in condition for determination, and the results were rather sad. However, if I had had time to hunt them, I am sure I could have found several times as many.

This year I expect to go to Guatemala some time in October and remain for about six months, working at several separated localities, some of them good for orchids, others not (probably). If funds could be supplied for Mr. Correll, I should be glad to have him with me when in good orchid regions, and could place him at other times in localities favorable for his work. For instance, Dr. Steyermark has been collecting at one place in Dept. Quezaltenango, about 4,000 ft., where there is every facility for work and about the richest vegetation I have ever found in Central America. A collector could remain there a month or more to advantage, and I think it would cost nothing. There are good collecting places also on the United Fruit Company properties, on both coasts, where expenses would be little or nothing. I doubt that I shall work there myself, but I may. If there is time, and I expect there will be, I want to go again to Cobán, much as I detest the place, in some respects.

I have a thousand dollars for expenses, which probably will be enough or nearly so. I plan to make free use of automobiles in regions where there are roads--that is everywhere except in Alta Verapaz. With a car you can reach innumerable good regions in every part of Guatemala. While they cost five to ten dollars (average about seven) per day, they are well worth it in results. There are few places from which you can go out on foot and make worth while collections.

If you wish to send Mr. Correll with such provision as may seem desirable for his expenses, I shall be glad to facilitate his work in every way, and provision can be made for the despoit of a set of my material at Harvard in return for a set of what he may collect independently. Material we might collect together would naturally be so divided. I doubt that it would be desirable for us to remain together all the time, especially in places where the orchid flora is sparse. Working independently, perhaps from the same headquarters, it would be possible to increase greatly the amount of material gathered.

Steyermark is now working, I suppose, on the slopes of the Volcano of Tajumulco, highest mountain of Guatemala. From there he will go to the north coast region for several weeks before returning to the States, about the first of April.

Sincerely yours,

Paul C. Standley



Standley, Paul Carpenter. 1940. "Standley, Paul Carpenter Jan. 29, 1940 [to O. Ames]." *Oakes Ames Orchid Herbarium correspondence files*

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