

## EXPEDITION TO GALAPAGOS ON LEON MANDEL YACHT

Through the generosity of Mr. Leon Mandel, of Chicago, who for several years has been prominent on the list of Contributors to the Museum, a party of Field Museum zoologists is conducting an expedition in the Galapagos Islands, and will subsequently engage in collecting along the coast of Peru. The expedition sailed early in January from Havana aboard Mr. Mandel's yacht *Carola*, a 247-foot twin-screw Diesel-powered vessel. On board are Mr. and Mrs. Mandel, and the latter's mother, Señora Elvira Pañerai, of Havana.

The Museum party includes Dr. Wilfred H. Osgood, Curator Emeritus, Department of Zoology; Mr. Rudyerd Boulton, Curator of Birds; Mr. Loren P. Woods, Assistant Curator of Fishes; Staff Taxidermist Leon L. Walters; Mr. Melvin A. Traylor, Jr., volunteer worker in the Division of Birds, and Mr. Peter Lambert, of Zion, Illinois, an experienced amateur diver.

From Havana the yacht proceeded by the Panama Canal directly to the Galapagos Islands which lie some 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador. Collections will be made there of the colorful fishes which inhabit the adjacent waters, and of the few reptiles, mammals, and endemic birds to be found on various islands in the group. Life studies in still and motion pictures will be made, including under-water photography by means of a diving bell and other equipment devised and furnished by Mr. Lambert. Important among the endemic birds of the islands is a genus of finches called *Geospiza*, whose variations from island to island, and in different localities within the larger islands, as observed by Charles Darwin, supplied an important stimulus in the development of the theory of evolution, when, something over a hundred years ago, that famous scientist visited the Galapagos and noted the different species of this group of birds.

## "RECEPTACLES FOR MEN'S SOULS"

The idea of the spirit or soul leaving the dying or dead body of a human being is very old and widespread, and characteristic of most religions, past and present, including Christianity. Conceptions of the occurrence of this event are usually expressed in the vaguest of terms, particularly by Christians. The manner of its taking place is seldom definitely visualized, although in a few paintings and other forms of expression attempts have been made to convey a picture of the departure of the soul as conceived by various authors.

Seeming tangibility is lent to the idea among the tribes of Malekula, in the New Hebrides islands of the South Pacific, by their production and use of "spirit receptacles." These are hollow wooden cones which the spirit of the deceased is supposed to enter at the time of death. Examples of them are on exhibition in Field Museum's

comprehensive Melanesian collections in Joseph N. Field Hall (Hall A).

## SPECIAL HOUSE FOR "TRAPPED SPIRITS"

When a man is dying among these people, one of these cones, very carefully wrapped so that no one can see it, is placed near or over the mouth of the expiring man. By this means it is believed that his spirit leaves his body and is received within the cone. When death has taken place, the cone containing the "captured spirit" is taken into a special house used only for the purpose. There it is placed on a platform with other similar cones. No uninitiated person is permitted to enter this house.

The spirits of the deceased are thus believed to remain present in this house, and the priesthood of the tribe is not above practising a little deception to bolster the faith of the followers, however sincere the leaders may be in the belief themselves; for on certain ceremonial occasions they cause the voices of the imprisoned spirits to come forth to gatherings of the believers. The "voices of the spirits" are produced by a shaman who talks through a bamboo tube into the cone, so that a peculiar muffled sound is produced. This subterfuge is, of course, carefully concealed from the ordinary tribesmen who must remain on the outside.

## VOICE EQUIPMENT EXHIBITED

Included in Field Museum's exhibit is one of these "spirit talkers." It consists of a coconut cup which in use was half filled with water. The eerie sound representing the voice of the spirit was produced by talking through a short bamboo tube which conducted the sound into and through the water. This equipment, naturally, was kept closely hidden whether in use or not, and specimens are rare and difficult to obtain. Likewise, the cones, because they are held in veneration by the natives, and believed actually to contain the souls of men, are not easily obtained. The visiting anthropologist must resort to the utmost in persuasive arguments to induce the natives to part with them. He must convince them that the cones will be properly cared for, as well as that no harm will befall those who allow them to be taken.

## SOUTH AMERICAN PRIMATES

BY COLIN CAMPBELL SANBORN  
CURATOR OF MAMMALS

The comical actions and wistful faces of monkeys always attract attention, and some of the South American monkeys, because of their prehensile tails, have an added special interest, as may be observed from a new exhibit in Hall 15 of Field Museum.

The prehensile tail is most highly developed in the purely arboreal spider monkeys and in the closely related woolly monkey. The latter lives exclusively on fruit, a diet that produces a very prominent abdomen.

The howler monkeys have a bony sound box which is a modification of the larynx.

This gives them exceptionally loud voices that carry more than a mile when a troop is calling. They also have prehensile tails, as have the black and white and the brown capuchin monkeys. The brown capuchin is the monkey commonly seen with street organ grinders. These groups are the only monkeys in the world with prehensile tails.

Two very short-tailed types of monkeys are the sakis and ouakaris. The sakis live in the valleys of the Amazon basin, have black crinkly fur, and one has a white head. The ouakaris are almost bald, and the three known species live in very restricted areas in northern Brazil. Besides these there are the squirrel, titi, and night monkeys. The night monkeys live in holes in trees during the day. All these American forms have thirty-six teeth, whereas the Old World monkeys have only thirty-two.

Often confused with the true monkeys are the marmosets and tamarins. These have but thirty-two teeth and, with the exception



Woolly Spider Monkey

Striking example of the prehensile-tailed monkeys of South America, included in a new exhibit recently added to the systematic collection of mammals in Hall 15.

of the big toe, have claws instead of flattened nails on the digits. The tail is often ringed and is not prehensile. There are many species of small size and with squirrel-like habits. They also show a great variety of colors, some being black and others white or golden, and many have a combination of colors. Like many of the primates they make interesting and attractive pets.

All these may be seen on two screens in the recently installed exhibit. Seven new specimens, prepared by Staff Taxidermist W. E. Eigsti, were added to those formerly on exhibition. All but one of the genera of South American primates are now represented on these screens.





Sanborn, Colin Campbell. 1941. "South American Primates." *Field Museum news* 12(2), 3-3.

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