

# *THE Current*

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## **Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration Receives Museums for America Grant, Other Support for its Collections**

The Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration at the University of California, Santa Barbara has received a \$30,633 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Through its Museums for America program, the institute is the primary source of federal funding for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums.

In addition, the Cheadle center has been selected to participate in a national museum assessment program by the institute and the Association of American Museums.

The Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration, which is engaged in graduate and undergraduate education, biodiversity research, habitat restoration, and public outreach, will use its grant plus matching funds in the same amount from the university to catalog the papers, photographs, artifacts, and memorabilia in its 11 regionally focused botanical and biological collections.

The collections cover topics such as plant anatomy, oak systematics, plant ecology, zoology, and paleontology.

Grants from Museums for America are designed to help museums serve the public more effectively by supporting high priority activities that advance the organization's mission of creating strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; to enhance learning and innovation; and to support professional development.

"I am pleased the center has been awarded a 2007 Museums for America grant to catalog the historical biological manuscript collections located in our C.H. Muller Library," said Jennifer Thorsch, Katherine Esau Director of the Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration. "When the project is completed, these valuable archives will be available to students and researchers through the California Digital Library's Online Archive of California."

According to Thorsch, the collections represent the life's work of some of UCSB's esteemed faculty and researchers in the biological sciences, including plant anatomists Katherine Esau and Vernon Cheadle, and plant ecologist Cornelius Muller.

As a participant in the 2007 Museum Assessment Program, the Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration joins 110 museums nationwide selected by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the American Association of Museums to take part in a confidential process of self-study, peer review, and implementation.

Museums use the assessment process to strengthen operations, build capacity, and enhance communication throughout the organization and in response to community needs.

"The benefits of the Museum Assessment Program are impressive: recipient museums find ways to improve their institutions on every level," said Anne-Imelda Radice, director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. "The ultimate beneficiaries, of course, are the people and communities these museums serve."

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.