



Summer Newsletter 2014

The Biodiversity Heritage Library

Inspiring discovery through free access to biodiversity knowledge

The [Biodiversity Heritage Library](#) (BHL) works collaboratively to make biodiversity literature openly available to the world as part of a global biodiversity community.

Strengthening Our Library: Program Updates

BHL Signs the Bouchout Declaration



On June 12, BHL became a proud signatory of the [Bouchout Declaration](#) for Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management. The Declaration affirms the commitment of its signatories "to promote free and open access to data and information about biodiversity by people and computers and to bring about an inclusive and shared knowledge management infrastructure that will allow our society to respond more effectively to the challenges of the present and future." Other BHL partners that are

signatories include the [Museum of Comparative Zoology](#) (Harvard) and the [Encyclopedia of Life](#). All told, over 70 organizations and 100 individuals had signed on by June 30, 2014.

Learn more: <http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2014/06/bhl-is-happy-to-be-charter-signatory-of.html>

BHL Welcomes Chicago Botanic Garden

BHL is pleased to announce that [The Lenhardt Library](#) of the [Chicago Botanic Garden](#) (CBG) has joined the BHL family. The Lenhardt Library

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BHL at a Glance

[Volumes Online:](#)

141,000+

[Pages Online:](#)

44MM+

[Flickr Images:](#)

91,000+

[Twitter Followers:](#)

3,700+

[Facebook Likes:](#)

7,800+

Keep in Touch

[Website](#)



[Facebook](#)



[Twitter](#)

holds 125,000 volumes pertaining to gardening, botany, plant conservation, and landscape design, with formats ranging from rare books to e-books. As part of its affiliation, the Lenhardt Library plans to contribute digitized rare books and journals to BHL, as well as missing issues from titles currently in our collection.

With the addition of the Chicago Botanic Garden and the [Research Library](#) at the [Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County](#) (which we highlighted in our previous newsletter), BHL now recognizes four affiliate and sixteen member institutions. Learn more about our newest affiliates: <http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2014/07/bhl-welcomes-two-new-affiliate-members.html>

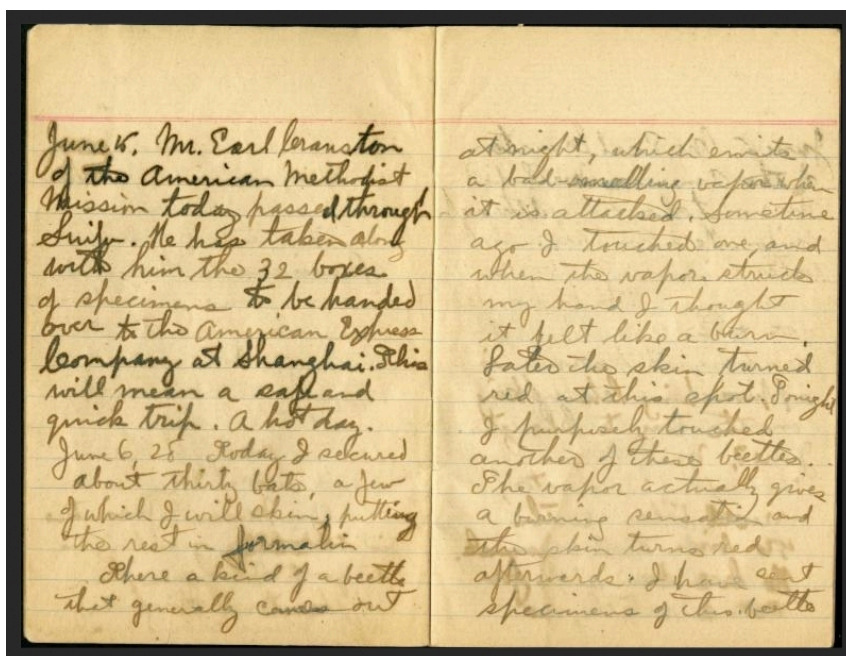
New Outreach & Communication Manager

In June, 2014, BHL welcomed Grace Costantino as the new Outreach and Communication Manager. No stranger to BHL, Grace started with the program back in 2008 as a BHL Librarian at the Smithsonian Libraries, after which she served as the BHL Program Manager from 2012-2013. In her new capacity, Grace will further refine BHL's outreach strategy, expand social media initiatives, supervise marketing and promotional activities, and engage with the public to excite audiences about the wealth of biodiversity heritage and knowledge available in BHL.

Learn more: <http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2014/06/welcoming-grace-costantino-bhl-outreach.html>

Building Collections: Content Updates

Nine Smithsonian Field Books in BHL



[Blog](#)



[Flickr](#)



[Pinterest](#)



Support BHL

We believe providing researchers with knowledge about biodiversity is critical to saving life on earth. Help us accomplish this goal by [donating to BHL](#) today.



BHL Report

Check out the [BHL Quarterly Report](#) to learn all about the BHL program and the progress we've made!

BHL and the [Field Book Project](#) (FBP) are pleased to announce that [nine of the Smithsonian field books](#) cataloged on FBP are now available through the BHL portal.

The books include seven diaries created by David Crockett Graham and two photo albums from the Harriman Alaska Expedition (1899). Each one not only tells its own fascinating story of exploration but also provides information and insights that complement the published literature in BHL. We are also especially pleased to see these notes joining the [64 other field notes](#) that are already in BHL thanks to the [Connecting Content project](#).

Learn more: <http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2014/06/nine-smithsonian-field-books-now-in-bhl.html>

Connecting with Users: Outreach Updates

BHL & Smithsonian Libraries co-curated Exhibit



Mark Catesby's 1754 illustration of the Passenger Pigeon is thought to be the first published depiction of the species.

Loss of biodiversity impacts the delicate balance of nature and ecosystems, sometimes subtly and sometimes in very visible ways. Some of the most infamous extinctions in North America have been species of birds that were once so amazingly abundant that they filled the skies, blocking out the sun. The fate of the [Passenger Pigeon](#), and three other extinct North American bird species ([Great Auk](#), [Carolina Parakeet](#), and [Heath Hen](#)) are the focus of a joint BHL/Smithsonian Libraries' exhibit at the National Museum of Natural History: [Once There Were Billions: Vanished Birds of North America](#).

The histories of these lost species are told through compelling narratives, taxidermied specimens (including Martha, the last Passenger Pigeon),

books from the Smithsonian Libraries' collection ([many of which are available digitally in BHL](#)) and [images from BHL](#).

Learn more: <http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2014/06/breathing-life-into-museum-exhibit.html>

BHL and EOL team up to promote Digital Volunteerism

On May 28, the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) and the [Encyclopedia of Life](#) (EOL) co-hosted an evening program on digital volunteerism. The event was organized by [The Smithsonian Associates](#) (TSA) and was attended by 74 people.

Carolyn Sheffield (BHL), Katja Schulz (EOL), and Jen Hammock (EOL) presented on BHL, EOL, and examples of how people could contribute to growing our knowledge of the planet's biodiversity. Presentations were followed by a hands-on session where attendees could begin machine tagging images in BHL's Flickr Photostream, cropping and rating images, and exploring the [iNaturalist platform](#). Several guests said they were delighted to learn about EOL and BHL and, by the end of the day, 129 more images in [BHL's Flickr Photostream](#) boasted machine tags. We look forward to the continued contributions of these amazing Smithsonian Associates session attendees!

Learn more: <http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2014/06/bhl-and-eol-co-host-smithsonian.html>

[Find out how you can help add tags to BHL images.](#)

Enhancing Our Library: Technical Updates

Purposeful Gaming and BHL

This quarter, the Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG) achieved two significant milestones on the IMLS-funded "[Purposeful Gaming and BHL](#)." The goal of the project is to investigate whether or not online games are a successful tool for the review and correction of OCR and crowdsourcing transcription of handwritten texts such as field notes.

On June 30, MBG announced the selection of Dartmouth College's [Tiltfactor](#) for designing the game that will help improve access to the texts in BHL. The two teams will begin working collaboratively on the design of the game in July of 2014, and it is expected that the game will be released publicly sometime in early summer of 2015.

Learn more: <http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2014/06/game-laboratory-tiltfactor-selected-for.html>

Earlier this quarter, the Purposeful Gaming team reached another major



Ivory-billed woodpecker from
Brewster's journal of 1890.

<http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2014/06/transcribing-field-notes-of-william.html>

BHL Presents!

Explore the links below to learn more about the presentations staff have given about BHL this quarter:

[Crowley, Bianca: Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries Annual Conference. *Growing the BHL.*](#)

[Kalfatovic, Martin: ALA Annual 2014. *The Biodiversity Heritage Library: Collaborating Globally, Scanning Locally.*](#)

[Kalfatovic, Martin: EOD Conference 2014. *Building for Demand: The Growth of the Biodiversity Heritage Library as Global Digital Library.*](#)

[Schlabach, Marty: Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries Annual Conference. *Purposeful Gaming, OCR Correction and Seed and Nursery Catalog Digitization: A Grant-Funded BHL Project.*](#)

milestone when they launched ten digitized volumes of William Brewster's field notes on two crowdsourcing transcription websites: the [Biodiversity Volunteer Portal](#) (BVP), a collaboration between the Australian Museum and the Atlas of Living Australia; and a BHL installation of [FromThePage](#), a transcription tool developed by Ben Brumfield. Try your hand at transcribing Brewster's idyllic writing while helping to unlock his valuable observations for the benefit of all!

Learn more: