

Remembering Eigenmann - Rockport native

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is uncertain, but the young ichthyologist chose to remain in California for some time. A particular event on August 20, 1887, may explain why he tarried: it is on this date that he and Miss Rosa Smith (who he presumably sought out in San Diego shortly after his arrival to the west coast) were married.

A series of well-known investigations into west coast fish species would follow and the "Eigenmann and Eigenmann" papers would garnish a great deal of authority. The newlyweds immediately studied at Harvard University, followed by employment with the Museum of Comparative Zoology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Here, Eigenmann embarked on the taxonomic study of South American fishes, publishing, "Preliminary Notes on South American *Nematognathi*," (catfishes). The taxonomy of South American fishes, a subject of great revelation and complexity, would be returned to by Eigenmann in some of the most remarkable work of his life.

December of 1888 found the Eigenmanns back in San Diego, where Eigenmann served as curator of the Natural History Society and established the San Diego Biological Labo-

ratory. The subject of west coast fishes was turned to once again and broadened, and Mrs. Eigenmann played an instrumental role in influencing her husband's interests. She took him to the rocks of Point Loma, where Eigenmann first encountered the Point Loma blind fish. He later confessed that it was in this moment the plans for investigating 'evolution by degeneration' came to his mind.

Eigenmann never lost sight of the innumerable questions remaining to be answered regarding South American ichthyology. In July 1891, "Catalogue of the Fresh-water Fishes of South America," was published. Encyclopedic in scope, the publication barely touched at Eigenmann's perceived inadequacy still found with South American studies, and the ichthyologist itched for the opportunity to study the fishes first hand by traveling himself to Columbia.

However, in 1891, Jordan was tapped to become the first president of Stanford University and consequently left IU for the post. Having been named Doctor of Philosophy by IU in the same year, Eigenmann accepted when Jordan appointed him professor of zoology at Bloomington.

A return to Indiana!

Eigenmann took to the position with enthusiasm, continuing to advance his biological studies of species beyond mere taxonomic issues of classification. Like Jordan before him, he had the adoration and respect of his

students. He would become director of the Biological Survey of Indiana through the Indiana Academy of Sciences and would set up a biological freshwater station at Turkey Lake.

Then, in 1892, an unexpected trip! A collecting expedition for the British Museum was organized to compare Pacific and Atlantic

coast fish in North America. The results were triumphant: 65 species were collected, of which 20 percent were new.

Back in Indiana, the state's complex system of caves — and the blind fish and fauna that populate them — occupied a great deal of Eigenmann's research. He would name a new-found species in Missouri (which he successfully distinguished from a species in Mammoth Cave), *Troglichthys rosae*, after his wife, and he would also study blind cave salamanders and blind woodrats, publishing paper after paper from his offices in Bloomington.

Due to the intricate, dispassionate and thorough nature of Eigenmann's methods and international interest in the concept of evolution by degeneration, this research attracted the world's attention. In 1902, the American Association for the Advancement of Science sent Eigenmann to Cuba; later the Carnegie Institution of Washington would send him again. In fact, between 1902 and 1904 he and his students would make a series of investigative trips to the region.

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