



Bass Biological Laboratory Collection



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Development of the 2009/2010 Bass Biological Lab (BBL) and Mote Technical Report (MTR) e-database is funded under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Florida Department of State, Division of Library and Information Services.



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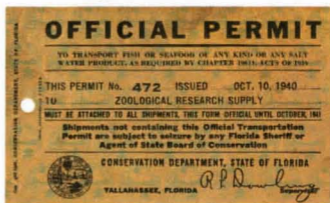
The Bass Laboratory was founded by John F. Bass, Jr. in 1932, when Englewood was only a small outpost of civilization. It was located on 10 acres and had about a dozen structures.

BASS BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY

- Was located on Lemon Bay in Englewood, Florida.
- Operated during the 1930s and 1940s.
- Functioned as the first year-round collecting station in the region.
- Served as the first co-educational research field station in Florida.

THE BASS COLLECTION

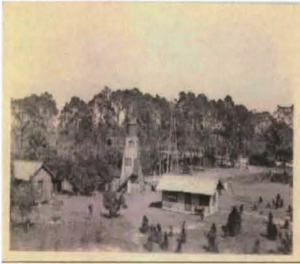
Maps Ecological Data
Permits Photographs
Invoices Correspondence
Field Notes Species Lists
Telegrams Meteorological Data
Personal Papers
and more



Dr. Estevez notes “few accounts exist of Florida’s pre-development marine environment. The Bass records can help ecologists reconstruct the natural biodiversity, system structure, and function of Englewood and Lemon Bay in the 1930s.”

ABOUT THE LAB

The **Mission Statement** of the Lab states that it was founded to “furnish research facilities to investigators in biological fields where the fauna, flora, and climate play an important role in the problem under observation.” In addition to accepting fellows and doing research in the greater Englewood area, Bass scientists were called upon to solve ecologically related disputes throughout the state.



The Bass Biological Lab was located on Lemon Bay. It's campus consisted of three one-story log laboratories, two frame storage houses, three log houses for

staff and visiting investigators, one frame house used as a dining hall and a dormitory for visiting investigators, administrative living quarters, a tool shop, a saltwater laboratory and other small buildings.

In addition to the 54' schooner, *Virginia*, the Lab also owned two launches - one 26' and one 12'.



Nearby habitats included low sandy keys, high sandy scrub oak hammocks, tall grass near muck ponds, southern pine thickets, palmettos, meadows, marsh lands, cactus and dry lands. The area's marine environment featured mud flats, oyster bars, sand, eel grass, projections of limestone formations, shallow bays and coves, and deep channels.

The entire staff and six additional laborers remained on duty year round. Financially, the Lab was founded with the help of an endowment from John F. Bass, Sr. Its income was derived mainly from stocks, bonds, and real estate.

The Lab charged minimal room and board (a dollar a day) from visiting fellows and scientists.

The research focused on marine biology, parasitology, invertebrate and vertebrate zoology, entomology and ecology.



The Bass Lab was not a teaching facility. Fellowship applicants were expected to clearly define the problem they hoped to investigate.

Applicants for fellowships were asked to provide a list of the equipment they needed, submit reprints or a bibliography, and were expected to contribute information to a key card index file of local flora and fauna.

They also provided a synopsis of their research when they left.



ZOOLOGICAL RESEARCH SUPPLY COMPANY

The Lab also had a profit-making subsidiary-a scientific sales department-called the Zoological Research Supply Company (ZRS), headed by Stewart Springer.

The ZRS supplied specimens to universities throughout the country for research.

It also distributed shark products such as shark teeth jewelry and shark liver oil.



WHAT REMAINS

The rescue and ongoing preservation of the Bass Lab documents has been a twenty year process spearheaded by Mote scientist, Dr. Ernest D. Estevez, beginning in 1989.

These records provide valuable material for researchers and the general public on the biodiversity, coastal ecology, and socio-economic conditions of 1930-1940s Florida.

While the Bass research facility is gone, the record of its innovation and commitment to the environment remain at Mote Marine Laboratory-a facility dedicated to research, innovation, conservation and outreach.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The original data rescue and archaeology project has been supported by the John Bass IV Family, the State of Florida, Appleby Foundation, Lemon Bay League, Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, Florida House Foundation, Bonnell Cove Foundation, Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club, Save Anna Maria, Inc., Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, and the Englewood Community Redevelopment Area Office.

The project team includes Librarians Susan Stover and Lisa Naidoo, Archivist Erin Mahaney, Information Specialist Henry Luciano, Dr. Ernest D. Estevez, and volunteers Dr. John Morrill, Dr. Lucille Fulrath, Dr. Ralph Touch, Bonnie Bentzen, Bob Bentzen, and Dr. Jack Taylor.

Others providing valuable assistance during difficult phases of the project and deserving special thanks include: Dr. Tom Carr, Linda Coleman, Willard A. Coy, Dr. Martin Cummings, Christine Davis, Donna Estevez, Diane Fihnn, Karen Geis, Tom Minnich, Dr. Geoff Patton, Scott Proffitt, Dan Smith, Steve Suau, Ellen Vandernoot, Dr. Gwendolyn Walton, and the Waterford Co.



PROJECT GOALS:

- Preserving and archiving the informational content as well as the physical medium of the Bass Biological Laboratory papers.
- Making Bass Biological Laboratory research easily available to the public.
- Promoting Florida environmental information through outreach and education.
- Advancing the science of the sea.