

Historical Contributions

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Arnold Ortmann's Little-known 1925-26 Mollusk Collecting Trips to Virginia

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ABSTRACT

Arnold Ortmann, Curator of Invertebrate Zoology at Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania during the early 20th century, and the foremost American freshwater malacologist of his time, made important contributions to the study of mollusks in Virginia, especially freshwater mussels. His final collecting trips to the Commonwealth occurred during the fall of 1925 and 1926, but he died in January 1927 and never published the results of these surveys. This paper includes a reconstruction of Ortmann's itinerary based on voucher specimen records and a summary of his collecting results for all mollusks obtained during these trips to eastern and southcentral Virginia. Several of the freshwater mussel species collected by Ortmann are now rare and declining, and no longer inhabit the areas where he documented them.

Key words: freshwater mussels, malacology, snails, unionids.