Department of Historical Research

Please note: Due to construction work the Department of Historical Research will be temporarily closed from the middle of May to the end of August 2013.

The Department of Historical Research maintains, and makes accessible, the history of science collections belonging to the Museum für Naturkunde.
The museum hosts an extensive collection of historical writings, documents, bequests, images and biological models. Together, these represent unique source material for the history of the subject areas covered by the museum.

Collection areas (selected)

Documents from research expeditions
A substantial part of the collection comprises letters, travel notes, expedition diaries, collection lists, sketchbooks, drawings and photos from research trips and expeditions.

Correspondence
The correspondence of three organisations - zoological museum (since 1810), the palaeontological museum (since 1889) and the ?Gesellschaft Naturforschender Freunde zu Berlin? (Berlin Society of Friends of Natural Science) (since 1773) - has been maintained almost in its entirety. This material mostly relates to the exchange

of scientific letters between former directors and curators ? as well as members of the Society ? with colleagues throughout the world. These letters are organised according to the correspondence partners.

Biological models

Anatomical teaching models have played, and continue to play, an important role in making the results of biological research accessible. Scientists, craftsmen and artists all played a part in creating these models, and these individuals used different materials to portray their ideas. In the Department of Historical Research there are models made from papier-mache, plaster, wax and even glass; all used in teaching students or for the museum?s exhibitions.

Portraits
The portrait collection currently comprises almost 7000 images (photographs, copper plates and lithographs), mostly of zoologists.

Contact

Dr. Hannelore Landsberg (Curator)
Dr. Sabine Hackethal (research associate)

Research project

Transcription of Friedrich Sellow?s expedition diaries