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Waldo Schmitt and the Presidential Cruise of 1938: Correspondence

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June 14, 1938

My dear Mr. President:

Your kind offer to allow a scientist from the Smithsonian Institution to accompany your coming cruise is most deeply appreciated. After consideration of the localities that will be visited and the type of work that will be possible, with your approval, we plan to detail Dr. Waldo L. Schmitt, Curator of Marine Invertebrates, in the U. S. National Museum, for this work. The more important results are to be expected from the sea hence our selection of a man skilled in marine life.

Dr. Schmitt is an expert marine zoologist and while he has not published on fishes he is well acquainted with the marine fish fauna that will be encountered. He is experienced in field work and on previous expeditions for us has visited the Galapagos Islands on three occasions, has traveled entirely around the coast of South America down to Tierra del Fuego, has visited the Falkland Islands, and has traveled in the West Indies. He is thoroughly familiar with the life aboard ship and with the type of scientific collecting that will be possible on your cruise.

We will expect to pay Dr. Schmitt's transportation to the point of embarkation, his subsistence while on board ship, and his transportation to Washington at the end of the cruise. We will also supply the necessary collecting equipment. In addition to collecting specimens we will wish to have him try modern color photography on the brilliantly colored fishes and other marine animals encountered.

Opportunity to investigate Clipperton Island is especially welcome as in our previous work we have not been successful in reaching that spot. Clipperton is the only coral atoll in the eastern Pacific and there is promise of much of interest there, as well as the other localities to be visited.

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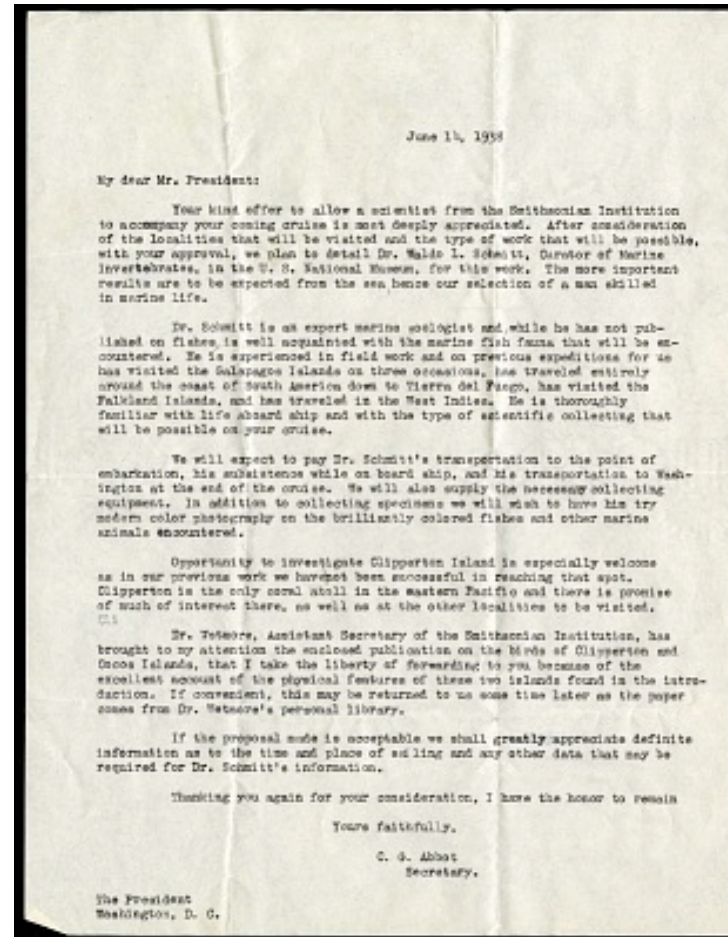
Dr. Wetmore, Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, has brought to my attention the enclosed publication on the birds of Clipperton and Cocos Islands, that I take the liberty of forwarding to you because of the excellent account of the physical features of these two islands found in the introduction. If convenient, this may be returned to us some time later as the paper comes from Dr. Wetmore's personal library.

If the proposal made is acceptable we shall greatly appreciate definite information as to the time and place of sailing and any other data that may be required for Dr. Schmitt's information.

Thanking you again for your consideration, I have the honor to remain

Yours faithfully,
C.G. Abbot
Secretary

The President
Washington, D.C.



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