

A History of the Invertebrate Paleontology Collections at Yale Peabody Museum

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Illustration by
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1866 - 1917

1866: George Peabody donates \$150,000 “for the foundation and maintenance of a Museum of Natural History, especially of the departments of Zoology, Geology, and Mineralogy, in connection with Yale College.” (YPMAR.000878)

1876: First Peabody Museum building opens.

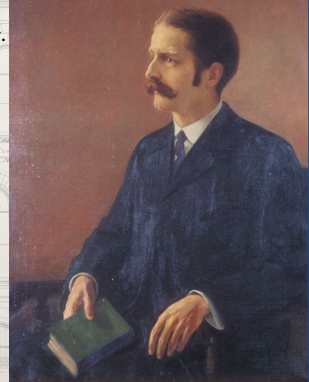
1888: Charles Beecher hired to oversee Invertebrate Paleontology.

1899: Beecher donates over 100,000 of his personal specimens to the museum (includes many brachiopods and trilobites).

1904: Beecher dies unexpectedly. Charles Schuchert hired.

1917: Peabody Museum building demolished to make way for new dormitories. Collections scattered across campus into empty rooms, attics, and sheds.

Portrait of Charles Beecher. YPMAR.001857



YALE PEABODY MUSEUM Hugh Gibb posing with the mounted pelvis and hind legs of Brontosaurus. YPMAR.001739



Lecture room. YPMAR.002106

1920 - 2020

1920: Carl Dunbar hired as assistant curator, improves fusulinid foraminifera and brachiopod collections.

1925: New Peabody Museum building opens.

1942: Charles Schuchert dies. During his tenure he donated over 80,000 specimens to the museum. He also purchased many orphaned collections for the museum. He funded student research and field expeditions with his personal money.

1946: Karl Waage hired as assistant curator, improves molluscan collections from the Western Interior Seaway.

2001: Class of 1954 Environmental Science Center opens with new space for collections and faculty research.

2018: Ed Bass donates \$160 million to completely renovate the museum.

Image of compactorized storage in Class of 1954 ESC. Photo by J. Utrup



Hall of Invertebrates. YPMAR.000552

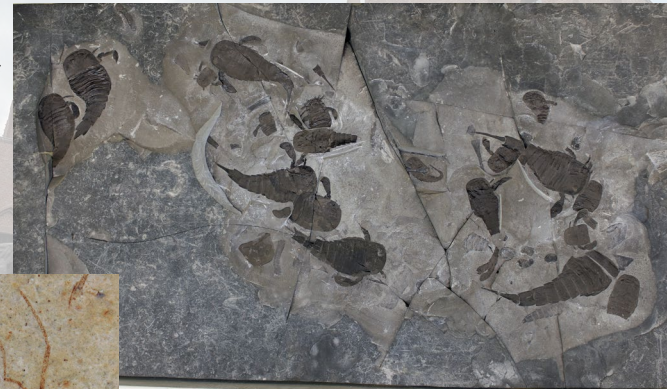


Display case in the Hall of Invertebrates. YPMAR.000553

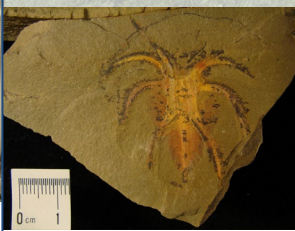
2024 -

2024: The renovated Peabody Museum building reopens. As of 2024, the Invertebrate Paleontology collection contains well over 4 million specimens including over 12,000 eurypterids from USA and Canada, over 8,000 specimens from the Early Ordovician Fezouata Lagerstätten of Morocco, over 15,000 insects and arachnids from the Late Eocene Green River Fm of USA, and many other fabulous specimens. Come and look at our collection: <https://collections.peabody.yale.edu/search/>

YPM IP 239016 Eurypterus lacustris



YPM IP 359500 undet. Araneae



YPM IP 522727 undet. Marrellomorpha



Dr. Erynn Johnson in front of the echinoderm display. Photo by J. Utrup

