

COLLECTING TRIPS ALONG THE PACIFIC COAST: DRAFT

**EDWARD F. RICKETTS' COLLECTING TRIPS ALONG THE
PACIFIC COAST**

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**COLLECTING TRIPS ALONG THE
PACIFIC COAST VIA AUTOMOBILE**

As soon as he arrived in 1923, Edward F. Ricketts began collecting marine invertebrates from the shoreline of the Monterey Peninsula. In her memoir, Nan Ricketts describes several excursions that included the family. Her remembrance of their frequent visits to the shore during the time the Ricketts and Galigher family shared a residence and an automobile reads as follows:

*We had only one car, and when there were collecting trips to be made, we made it a picnic day too. We packed food if we had to go far. If not then we just packed food for the babies and put the babies in a wash basket in the back of the "Big Mitchell," our car. It was an oldie but was very good to us, taking us on many beautiful trips and adventures.*⁸

Several years later Ricketts replaced the "Big Mitchell" with the purchase of a Packard sedan, which allowed him to extend his collecting trips beyond the U. S. borders. In addition to gathering specimens for the business, Ricketts, with pencil in hand, filled his notebooks with descriptions of many of the shorelines he visited. These detailed notes of the bathymetric zone, depth of tidal horizon, exposure to wave shock, bottom type, and invertebrate species associated with the various habitats formed the foundation of what became the book *Between Pacific Tides*.

Through the referencing of various sources of information one can identify a fair number of these road trips that extend from Estero de Punta Banda, Mexico to Vancouver, British Columbia. For most collecting trips that required a significant distance of travel, the duration of time spent away from the Monterey Peninsula lasted anywhere from several weeks to several months.

In the book *Between Pacific Tides*, Ricketts mentions his visiting the shores of Southern California: *For several years we have collected, observed, and photographed along the Corona del Mar shore at Newport Bay and in the region near Laguna.*

According to EF Ricketts' Survey Cards there was a trip to the beaches of La Jolla, Mission Bay - San Diego, Tijuana and Ensenada, Todos Santos Bay, Mexico in May 1925.⁹ In her memoir, Nan Ricketts described one such trip which included their

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visiting Southern California while en route to Mexico: *Once, in the Twenties, when we were on our way to Mexico, we stayed overnight in San Diego. We saw vendors roasting chestnuts and we bought some. They were hot and very good.*¹⁰

EF Ricketts' Survey Cards reference his collecting in Newport Bay, August 1929¹¹ and returning to collect from the shores of Newport Bay, Corona Del Mar, Laguna Beach, in January - February 1930.¹² Also referenced among these cards are George and Nettie MacGinitie, who accompanied Ricketts collecting trips. One can presume from the reading of Nan Ricketts' memoir, that she to may have been a member of one or both of these collecting trips.

In July and August 1930, Ed Ricketts and Jack Calvin spent six weeks exploring the Washington and Vancouver Island, British Columbia.¹³ Specimens donated to the Smithsonian and California Academy of Science provide information as to the locations visited (South Puget Sound - Wholloch Bay, Olympia Peninsula - Tide Flats E Of Pysht, Port Townsend, West of Lighthouse,¹⁴ British Columbia: Vancouver Island: Comox.)¹⁵ In the book *Between Pacific Tides*, Ricketts mentions their collecting of *Eupentacta quinquesemita* during this trip: *Specimens we took in the summer of 1930 at Pysht, in Juan de Fuca Strait, achieved a record of 100 percent evisceration in a few hours and before we could get them into anesthetizing trays.*

During November and December of 1930, the MacGinitie's again accompanied Ricketts on a collecting trip to the shores of Southern California, (Newport Bay, Corona Del Mar, Balboa, Laguna Beach) and Mexico (Tijuana, Ensenada, Estero de Punta Banda).¹⁶ Ricketts provided the following mention in *Between Pacific Tides* of their finding abundant number of the octopi *Octopus bimaculoides* during this, and other visits to Mexico: *Between Tijuana and Ensenada we have found octopuses very numerous in April, May, and December, in several different years. In December 1930 they were so abundant that one could count finding a specimen under at least every fourth rock overturned.*

Three months later, in March of 1931, Dr. and Mrs. Torsten Gislén accompanied Ed Ricketts, wife Nan, and their youngest child Cornelia, on a collecting trip to Southern California and Mexico's Baja Peninsula.¹⁷ This excursion with the Gislén's was described in some detail by Nan Ricketts in her memoir:

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There were some wonderful collecting areas around Laguna Beach, La Jolla and Newport Beach. On one occasion we had with us a Swedish family from Lund University, the Gislens.... When we crossed the Mexican border, the guards took Dr. Gislen to the office because he was from Sweden. Ed went with him to help (since Ed was well known by the guards, as the funny Californian who carries a lot of empty jars in his car and fills them up with animals).¹⁸

Ricketts provided the following comment in *Between Pacific Tides*, regarding their locating the burrowing sea anemone *Edwardsiella californica* during this excursion: *Early in March 1931 we found a sandy mudbank east of Corona del Mar that must have averaged more than 50 of these animals in a tenth of a meters.*

In January 1932, George MacGinitie accompanied Ricketts on yet another collecting trip to the shores of Southern California, Tijuana and Ensenada, Mexico.^{19, 20 21} Ricketts mentioned this excursion in a letter he wrote to Torsten Gislén dated May 27th, 1932: *...On our last trip down there we collected at Newport Bay, Ensenada, Ensenada estuary and Boca de la Playa, in the head of the Santa Tomas Valley. The Newport Bay region has changed around considerably due to the influx of sand and the change of currents incident to harbor dredging and breakwater work.²²*

With each of the above collecting trips having been conducted via automobile it is no wonder that the odometer on Ricketts' first Packard tallied well over 100,000 miles.²³

In 1933, Ricketts traded in this automobile for a 1930 Packard 7-40 Limousine Sedan with 28,000 miles on the odometer. Bruce Ariss, in his book *Inside Cannery Row*, provided the following description of this automobile. *The Packard was an enormous eight cylinder-in-line automobile, chauffeur driven style, with the front and back sections separated by a vertical crack-down window. The car was black, shiny, had lots of chrome, and sported two huge tires in the front fender wells. It had been a great luxury car in its day. Ed had bought it from a bankrupt Pebble Beach estate. It had fine black leather upholstery in the front and mohair in the back, with cut glass vases for flowers and even a phone, with a buzzer, that Jean and I had to try out, of course.*

In a letter to Torsten Gislén, Ricketts mentioned that he expected he'd own this car for five years and rack up about 120,000 miles.²⁴ As it turned out, Ricketts drove this Packard for the next four years.

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In the spring of 1933 Ricketts visited the beaches of Southern California to collect *amphioxus* for the Pacific Biological Laboratories while staying with George and Nettie MacGinitie.²⁵ During the summer of 1933, according to his father, Charles Abbott Ricketts, Ed was collecting in the Puget Sound region.²⁶ Between the fall of 1933 and winter of 1934, Ricketts returned to the beaches of Southern California to collect octopi which he delivered via air freight to New York.²⁷

In 1934 and 1935, Ed and Nan Ricketts took the children on three-month summer vacations north of Puget Sound.^{28, 29, 30} During these trips, Ed and Nan worked the low tides, collecting the specimens to be sold through the Pacific Biological Laboratories.³¹ Beyond gathering specimens for the business, Ricketts filled his notebooks with detailed description of the shorelines surrounding the entrance to Puget Sound.

Bruce Ariss, in his book *Inside Cannery Row*, recounts a collecting trip with EF Ricketts, John Steinbeck and his wife Jean Ariss, taken in May of 1936 to the beaches of Southern California (*La Jolla Beach, Corona Del Mar*) and Mexico (*Ensenada, San Antonio Del Mar and Boca de la Playa, in the head of the Santa Tomas Valley*).

During the summer of 1937, Ricketts traveled twice in the Packard to the shores north of Puget Sound, accompanied by his son, Ed Jr. on both trips, and his daughter, Nancy joining the second trip.^{32, 33, 34} In the fall of 1937, Ed Ricketts traded in his second Packard for a Ford V-8 60 h. p.; which got better gas mileage on collecting trips to distant shores.³⁵ In 1938 and 1939, Ricketts traveled in the Ford on collecting trips to Southern California and Mexico.^{36, 37, 38, 39}

In the summer of 1942 Ricketts and his common-law wife Toni Jackson traveled to the Hoodspout, Washington where the couple spent six weeks collecting specimens for Pacific Biological Laboratories and exploring the North Pacific Coast.⁴⁰

After about nine years, the Ford coupe became completely rusted out. In 1946 or 1947 Ricketts purchased an old noisy 1936 Buick sedan, a car in constant need of repair.⁴¹ On the evening of May 8, 1948, Ed Ricketts left a gathering at the lab in his old Buick on what became his final collecting trip, as he went to go buy steaks for dinner from a market located in New Monterey. As he traveled east on Cannery Row and swung up the hill on Drake Street in Monterey, Edward F. Ricketts was struck by the Southern Pacific Railroad's – Del Monte Express. Whether the car stalled out on the tracks, or

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Ricketts could not hear the approaching Express as the train swung around the blind corner of Drake Street and Wave Avenue, one will never know. He died three days later, just three days shy of his 52nd birthday.

REFERENCES

8. Ricketts, Anna Maker (1984). *Recollections*. Stanford University Libraries.
9. Ricketts May 1925, collecting trip to the shores of La Jolla, Mission Bay – San Diego, Todos Santos Bay, Baja, California and Tijuana referenced in EF Ricketts Southern California Survey Cards: See Amphineura, Decapoda, Gastropoda, Asteroidea.
10. Ricketts, Anna Maker (1984). *Recollections*. Stanford University Libraries.
11. Referenced in EF Ricketts Southern California Survey Cards: Decapoda, Sipunculoidea collected in Newport Bay, August 1929.
12. Referenced in EF Ricketts Southern California Survey Cards: February 1930 collecting trip to the shores of Laguna Beach, Newport Bay, Corona Del Mar referenced in EF Ricketts Southern California Survey Cards: Decapoda, Schizopoda [Mysidacea], Isopoda, Polychaeta, Echinoidea, Holothurioidea,
13. [Storey, Dean. Internal memo to William Hawley Davis. August 19, 1930. Stanford University Press] [Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries] [*They were in this afternoon on their way back from British Columbia (where they have been collecting for the past six weeks) and wanted to know if we had yet glanced over this partial manuscript.*]
14. Specimens donated to the Smithsonian Invertebrate Zoology Collection
<http://collections.nmnh.si.edu/search/iz/>
15. Specimens donated to the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology Collection
<http://www.mcz.harvard.edu/Departments/InvertZoo/researchcoll.html>

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16. Referenced in EF Ricketts Southern California Survey Cards: November and December of 1930 collecting trip to the shores of Southern California, (Newport Bay, Corona Del Mar, Balboa, Laguna Beach) and Mexico (Tijuana, Ensenada, Estero de Punta Banda) Referenced in EF Ricketts Southern California Survey Cards (Porifera, Alcyonaria, Turbellaria, Bryozoa/Ectoprocta, Phoronida, Stomatopoda, Gastropoda, Pelecypoda, Asteroidea, Ophiuroidea, Echinoidea).
17. Referenced in EF Ricketts Southern California Survey Cards: Gastropoda,
18. Ricketts, Anna Maker. (1984). *Recollections*. Stanford University Libraries.
19. In January 1932, George and Nettie MacGinitie accompanied EF Ricketts on a collecting trip to the shores of Southern California, Tijuana and Ensenda Mexico. Primary sources for this collecting trip include MacGinitie and Ricketts Contributions to the Smithsonian Invertebrate Collection and the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology Invertebrate Collection.
20. Specimens donated to the Smithsonian Invertebrate Zoology Collection
<http://collections.nmnh.si.edu/search/iz/>
21. Specimens donated to the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology Collection
<http://www.mcz.harvard.edu/Departments/InvertZoo/researchcoll.html>
22. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Torsten Gislén. May 27, 1932. [Torsten Gisléns archive, Lund University Library] [*On our last trip down there we collected at Newport Bay, Ensenada, Ensenada estuary and Boca de la Playa, in the head of the Santa Tomas Valley. The Newport Bay region has changed around considerably due to the influx of sand and the change of currents incident to harbor dredging and breakwater work.*]

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23. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Torsten Gislén. December 18, 1933. [Torsten Gisléns archive, Lund University Library] [*The Packard piled up more than 100,000 miles.*]
24. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Torsten Gislén. December 18, 1933. [Torsten Gisléns archive, Lund University Library] [*A bigger and better one; the 7-40 Packard 1930 Limosene-Sedan. Got a good buy, chauffer-driven, only 28,000 miles, and by one man only. I expect to keep this 5 years, and pile up 120,000 miles.*]
25. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Torsten Gislén. December 18, 1933. [Torsten Gisléns archive, Lund University Library] [*I have since made another trip into Southern California. Saw McGinitie, who is now director of the CIT marine station at Newport Bay, and collected there several days, staying with them. Picked up alot of amphioxus, and got some fairly definite dope on growth groups; thru measurements.*]
26. Ricketts, Charles Abbott. Letter of correspondence to Hazel E Branch, University of Wichita, Wichita, Kansas. August 21, 1933. [Edward Ricketts Junior Personal Collection][Courtesy of Ed Ricketts Jr] [*Dear Professor, Please pardon our delay in answering your recent letter regarding slides, the party in charge of our slide department has been ill and unfortunately our Mr. E.F. Ricketts is on a boat collecting somewhere in the Puget Sound Region.*]
27. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Steve A. Glassell. March 29, 1934. [Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7257, Box 2, Folder 3] [*My trip down south was a flying one as usual. I had to make two special trips from Laguna Beach, where we were staying, to LA. Glendale and Burbank Airport, to put some live octopi aboard the plane for NY (and both lots arrived dead).*]
28. Ricketts, E. F. (1934). Highlights of The PBL Summer 1934 Northern Collecting Trip. Summary For Dr. Fisher. Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.

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29. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Steve A. Glassell. August 20, 1935. [Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7257, Box 2, Folder 3] Letter sent from Hoodspport, Washington. [*Going soon up to BC, and will have a look around Victoria, Sooke and probably into Saanich and Jordan River regions, but don't anticipate much in your line.*]
30. Ricketts, E.F. Letter of correspondence to Steve A. Glassell. September 12, 1935. [Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7257, Box 2, Folder 3] [*Started home from Vancouver Island with 3 alive, got two of them clear to Calif and would have got them home here OK if I'd only taken the coast road, or traveled faster, or carried ice, or extra sea water, but out of Redding the last kicked in.*]
31. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Torsten Gislén. December 27, 1938. [Torsten Gisléns archive, Lund University Library]. [*I have now a Ford 60, the small V-8, the cheapest car to run I have ever used.*]
32. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Jack Calvin. July 3, 1937.] [California History Room, Monterey Public Library [*Just a hasty word, terribly busy and about to start for Hoodspport again for Gonionemus. Drive up there like hell, collect 6 tides, back fast, total 10 days. Ain't that a vacation.*]
33. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to V. E. Bogard. July 17, 1937. Monterey Public Library. [*Went to Puget Sound (took Ed Jr).*].
34. E. F. Ricketts. Letter of correspondence to George MacGinitie. February 16, 1938. [Edward Ricketts Junior Personal Collection of Letters] [Courtesy of Ed Ricketts Jr]. [*I made two hurried trips up north last summer as I may have told you; took the two older kids on the second trip. With that exception, I haven't done much collecting.*]
35. Ricketts, Anna Maker. (1984). *Recollections*. Stanford University Libraries.

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36. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Torsten Gislén. December 27, 1938. [Torsten Gisléns archive, Lund University Library] [*I made a trip south, covered pretty well the ground we went over on that fine trip*].
37. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to Waldo L. Schmitt. June 15, 1939. [Record Unit 307: National Museum of Natural History, Division of Crustacea Records, circa 1908-1979, Box 37, Folder 9.] [*I have started collecting again (Just back from a trip into Lower California) but first things first-the bread and butter items*].
38. Ricketts, E. F. Letter of correspondence to MW De Laubenfels. June 17, 1939. [Stanford University Libraries, Special Collections.] [*In the meantime I had been down thru your country en route to collecting trip to Ensenada, but just passing thru -Long Beach was the nearest I came to Pasadena.*].
39. *Diplandros singularis* Hyman, 1953a: 341-342, figs. 101-105. Paratype: AMNH 668.1-668.3 (1 specimen). Locality: Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico, Pacific Ocean. Collector: E. F. Ricketts, May 31, 1939.
40. Rodgers, K. A., ed. (2002). *Renaissance Man of Cannery Row: The life and letters of Edward F. Ricketts*. Tuscaloosa. University of Alabama Press.
41. Ibid.