

Collecting Evolution: The Galapagos Expedition that Vindicated Darwin

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In 1905, eight sailor-scientists from the California Academy of Sciences set out on an 89-foot schooner from San Francisco for a scientific collection expedition in the Galápagos Islands. By the time they finished in 1906, they had completed one of the most important expeditions in the history of both evolutionary and conservation science. They brought back over 78,000 specimens, validating the ideas of Charles Darwin and laid the groundwork for foundational evolution texts like *Darwin's Finches*. Despite its significance, no longer treatment has appeared on this voyage, lost amongst discussion of Darwin's trip on HMS *Beagle*. In my new book *Collecting Evolution*, I tell the story of the 1905–06 Galápagos expedition in terms of why they went, what they did, and what it means today. I follow these eight young men aboard the schooner *Academy* to the Galápagos and back, and reveal their personal stories and groundbreaking success in historical context.

Biography: Matthew James is a Fellow of the California Academy of Sciences, and Professor of Geology and Paleontology at Sonoma State University in northern California. He has been writing about the Galapagos in historical, scientific, and research capacities for thirty-five years.