



## Guide to the James E. Deacon Pupfish Research Files

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Persistent URL for this finding aid: <http://n2t.net/ark:/62930/f18q7g>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
<b>Creator:</b>	Deacon, James E.
<b>Title:</b>	James E. Deacon Pupfish Research Files
<b>ID:</b>	UA-00102
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	approximately 1960 to 2015
<b>Physical Description:</b>	3.85 Cubic Feet (3 boxes)
<b>Physical Description:</b>	3.25 Linear Feet
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	The James E. Deacon Pupfish Research Files (approximately 1960-2015) contain files kept by James E. Deacon, who was a faculty member in the biological sciences and environmental studies department at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The collection primarily contains research files and audiovisual recordings about the Devils Hole pupfish, an endangered species of desert fish only found in Nevada. Also included are copies of Deacon's testimony and reports for a hearing from 2011 on the probable groundwater pumping by the Southern Nevada Water Authority in Spring, Cave, Dry Lake, and Delamar Valleys (SCDD) in Nevada. The SCDD files also contain copies of exhibits referenced by Deacon in his initial and rebuttal reports for the hearing.

### Preferred Citation

James E. Deacon Pupfish Research Files, approximately 1960-2015. UA-00102. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada. <http://n2t.net/ark:/62930/f18q7g>

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## Biographical Note

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James Everett Deacon was a biologist and environmentalist who taught at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) from 1960 to 2002 in the Department of Biological Sciences where

he was instrumental in establishing the master's and doctorate programs. Deacon also helped establish the Department of Environmental Studies as part of the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs. In the early 1960s, Deacon discovered the pupfish, an endangered desert fish, during a scuba diving trip at Devils Hole in Death Valley National Park. The biology and conservation of the Devil's Hole pupfish, sustainable water supply and use, and regional ecology were areas of research for Deacon throughout his career.

Deacon testified in defense of the pupfish in the 1970s during a legal fight over groundwater pumping. He also played a major role in securing water rights for Death Valley and Zion national parks and aided in the establishment of Ash Meadows and Moapa National wildlife refuges in southern Nevada. Deacon was a founding member of the Desert Fishes Council (established in 1970) and chaired the organization from 1976 to 1978. He was the recipient of many awards from the American Fisheries Society, the National Wildlife Federation, and The Nature Conservancy. He was named as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and received the E.O. Wilson Award for Outstanding Science in Biodiversity Conservation from the Center for Biological Diversity in 2012. Two local desert fish species were named after Deacon, the Spring Mountains springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis deacon*) and Las Vegas dace (*Rhinichthys deacon*). Deacon passed away in 2015 at the age of 80 in Henderson, Nevada.

Sources:

Brean, Henry. "Noted UNLV biologist James Deacon has died." *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, February 28, 2015: B001. NewsBank: Access World News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/153C31D6E56230C0>.

"James Deacon obituary." *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, March 2, 2015. <https://obits.reviewjournal.com/obituaries/lvrj/obituary.aspx?n=james-deacon&pid=174286356>

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## Scope and Contents Note

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The James E. Deacon Pupfish Research Files (approximately 1960-2015) contain files kept by James E. Deacon, who was a faculty member in the biological sciences and environmental studies department at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The collection primarily contains research files and audiovisual recordings about the Devils Hole pupfish, an endangered species of desert fish only found in Nevada. Also included are copies of Deacon's testimony and reports for a hearing from 2011 on the probable groundwater pumping by the Southern Nevada Water Authority in Spring, Cave, Dry Lake, and Delamar Valleys (SCDD) in Nevada. The SCDD files also contain copies of exhibits referenced by Deacon in his initial and rebuttal reports for the hearing.

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## Arrangement

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Materials remain as they were received.

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## Administrative Information

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### Access Note

Collection is open for research.

### Publication Rights

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### Acquisition Note

Materials were transferred periodically to the University Archives; accession number 2020-081. Additional folder of material was donated in 2024 by Paula Jacoby-Garrett; accession number 2024-042.

### Processing Note

The collection was minimally processed by Tammi Kim in 2020. The materials were quickly reviewed to provide a general description of the contents of each box and an estimate of dates represented in the material. Loose papers were foldered. No further work was performed on the materials. In 2024, Sarah Jones added an additional folder of material to the collection.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Collections

The following resources may provide additional information related to the materials in this collection:

DJames Deacon oral history interview, 2008 September 04. OH-00918. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Dr. James Deacon oral history interview, 2006 August 24. OH-00388. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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## Names and Subjects

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- Desert ecology
- Desert Pupfish
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas -- History

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Containers
Devil's Hole pupfish research files, approximately 1967 to 1985	box 01
Memorial pamphlet and booklet prepared in James Deacon's honor featuring images from his life, 2015	box 01
SCDD hearing files: Deacon evidence and reports, 2011	box 02
Devil's Hole pupfish specimen cards, audiovisual recordings on pupfish including interviews with Deacon, Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, news reports, approximately 1960 to 1994	box 03