

Robert Lester Wisner



Robert Lester Wisner was born December 24, 1912 in Indiana. After military service in World War II, Wisner received a BA from San Diego State University in 1947 before entering SIO in 1951 as a graduate student of Carl L. Hubbs. There he remained to become Hubbs' assistant.

During the early 1950s Wisner conducted studies on marlin, later he worked on lampreys and hagfish. Wisner continued to work in Scripps' Marine Vertebrate Division / Marine Biological Research Division until his retirement after Carl Hubbs passed away.



John McGowan (left) and Bob Wisner on Transpac Expedition, 1953

Robert Wisner participated in many major Scripps expeditions, and on cruises of the Marine Vertebrate Division and CalCOFI (California Cooperative Oceanic Fishery Investigation): 1952 Shellback Expedition; 1953 TransPacExpedition to Japan; 1956 Eniwetok, studying fishes and marine life for environmental studies connected with Operation Redwing, one of the Pacific atomic tests.



Bob Wisner on Transpac Expedition, 1953

He further participated in Vermilion Sea Expedition (1959), Monsoon Expedition in 1960, Piquero Expedition (1968) and SouthTow (1972). Wisner often served as expedition leader or co-leader, and collected fish and other marine specimens on many of these cruises.

From these expeditions, Wisner went on to contribute by collecting many specimens for the Scripps Institution of Oceanography Fish Collection and wrote up procedures for these specimens, data capture and curatorial policies for the collection in the early 1950s.

He developed expertise in the use of the Issacs Kidd Midwater Trawl and nets and collection instruments, and was often consulted by other scientists and institution in their use. He was an avid sports fisherman and served as coach of the UCSD Intercollegiate Pacific Coast Fishing Tournament.

Wisner was married to Fern, his wife who died in 1990; they had no children.

Adapted from biographical information from Deborah Day, Scripps Archives