

# David W. Johnston collection of Ivan Rexford Tomkins letters, photograph, and typescript

## Descriptive Summary

<b>Repository:</b>	Georgia Historical Society
<b>Creator:</b>	Johnston, David W.
<b>Title:</b>	David W. Johnston collection of Ivan Rexford Tomkins letters, photograph, and typescript
<b>Dates:</b>	1963-1965
<b>Extent:</b>	0.05 cubic feet (1 folder)
<b>Identification:</b>	MS 2426

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## Biographical/Historical Note

Ivan Rexford Tomkins (1893-1966) was born in Ellington, Pennsylvania. He served in World War I, first in the Infantry (1917), and later with the 56th Engineers (1918). He moved to Georgia in 1922 to work with the Public Health Service and was assigned to the U.S. Quarantine Station on Cockspur Island, Savannah River. Soon after, around the year 1925, he accepted the position as Dredging Inspector with the Corps of Engineers. He rose to the position as Chief of the projects Branch of the Savannah District until his retirement in 1956. His work at the Quarantine Station and on the dredges gave him ample opportunities to develop his interest in the life of the salt marshes, beach, and waters surrounding him. His knowledge and advice was sought by many men of science. He became an excellent photographer. He published articles in *Auk*, *Wilson Bulletin*, *Oriole*, *The Journal of Mammalogy*, as well as studies for the Georgia Ornithological Society. He discovered a unique spiny mussel, *Elliptio Spinosa*, in the Altamaha River swamp.

Born in 1926, David W. Johnston taught ornithology at the University of Virginia's Mountain Lake Biological Station for nearly twenty years and authored the book, *The History of Ornithology in Virginia* (2003). He also edited several ecological studies, as well as the *Journal of Field Ornithology* and *Ornithological Monographs*.

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## Scope and Content Note

This collection contains ten letters, a photograph, and a typescript of an unpublished article written by Ivan Rexford Tomkins entitled, "Sexual Difference in the Migration of the Boat-tailed Grackle". The letters are all authored by Tomkins and addressed to David W. Johnston and discuss topics related to bird identification, migration, and physiology. The photograph depicts the outstretched wing of a male Common Goldeneye bird and was taken by Tomkins and attached to a letter. Collection materials date from 1963 to 1965.

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## Index Terms

Birds.  
Letters (correspondence)  
Photographs.  
Tomkins, Ivan Rexford, 1893-1966.  
Typescripts.

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## Administrative Information

### Processing Information

This collection is processed at the Basic Level (or collection level). There is no detailed inventory for this collection as

it is not fully processed. To request that this collection be added to our priority list of collections to be fully processed as staffing and funding allow, please contact the Library and Archives staff.

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## **Restrictions**

### **Access Restrictions**

Collection is open for research.

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