

**University of Georgia Herbarium [GA]**  
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## **Protocols for the Plant Identification Service**

The following will facilitate the process of plant identification:

1. Private citizens not associated with UGA, the extension service, or other governmental agencies should first route their specimen(s) through their local county extension office; extension agents are likely to be familiar with the native and cultivated plant species in your area. To find the appropriate extension agents near you, see <https://extension.uga.edu/county-offices.html>
2. Please provide us with contact information, preferably via our "Request for Plant Identification" form available at [Herbarium Policies](#)
3. Instructions for shipping plants:
  - a. Each specimen should consist of a stem with attached leaves and flowers or fruits if present.
  - b. **DO NOT SEND/BRING LIVE PLANTS.**
  - c. Place each specimen between a fold of newsprint (ranging in size from 8½" x 11" to 11" x 16") and two pieces of cardboard.
  - d. Remove all dirt from roots.
  - e. **DO NOT ENCLOSE PLANTS IN PLASTIC!** This includes zip-locked bags, plastic bubble wrap, plastic-lined envelopes and Priority Mail envelopes. Plastic promotes mold growth making identification impossible.
4. Do not send more than five specimens at a time unless special arrangements are made in advance, so that we can allocate adequate staff time for identification.
5. Collect two of each specimen so that you can keep one for reference. Submitted specimens will not be returned due to time and expense.
6. If submitting more than one plant, each specimen must be numbered separately. These numbers are used for reference in our reply to you.
7. Plant data is critical for identification. Please include the following information with your specimen(s):
  - a. Source (i.e., habitat, whether it is cultivated)
  - b. General description of plant habit (i.e., herb, vine, shrub, tree; height)
  - c. Flower and/or fruit color, size, aroma
  - d. Time of flowering
8. Please note: we may require additional information for specimen labels. We use interesting plants to make permanent herbarium specimens to facilitate future identifications.

*Thank you!*