

Collections Use Policies

The University of Georgia Herbarium, founded in the 1920's, is a significant collection with over 279,000 vascular plant specimens. Supervision of these fragile and valuable specimens is essential for their conservation and for maintaining the organization of the collection for future research. Therefore, we developed the following guidelines for collections use:

- **Access.** Faculty and other qualified individuals from UGA and other institutions/agencies with projects specifically related to plant systematics are encouraged to use the collection with the permission of the Curator, Curatorial Assistant, or other designated staff member. Such researchers should contact the Curator prior to their visit so that adequate staff time can be allocated. The main herbarium collection may not be used by students for identification exam preparation; a teaching (synoptic) collection for this purpose is available in the teaching laboratory (Rm. 2604) by appointment.
- **Specimen handling.** Specimens are fragile and require special treatment. Researchers need to be aware of the protocols before working with the collection.
 - **Handling.** Do not bend, break, or tear the specimens. Do not turn sheets face down. Non-destructive images may be taken of specimens. All accessioned specimens have been imaged by herbarium staff and images may be shared by request or viewed @ sernec.org.
 - **Filing.** Herbarium staff refile specimens in the herbarium.
 - **Destructive analyses.** Secure permission from the Curator before removing any material from specimens.
 - **Fragment packets.** Place loose plant pieces *detached from particular specimen* in the packet on the sheet. Notify herbarium staff about sheets lacking packets (or requiring other repair).
 - **Insect damage control.** Keep herbarium doors closed as much as possible, especially when taking folders away to a table for examination. Return all material to a cabinet (or give it to herbarium staff for refiling) the same day. Please report immediately any evidence of insect damage in the collection.
- **Annotations.** We appreciate annotations--small labels that update the determinations and/or cite the project for which specimens were examined. Annotations should be properly handwritten or typed on annotation labels; do not write directly on the specimen sheet. See the Curator for more detailed instructions on format.
- **Loans.** No specimens may be removed from the herbarium collection without proper loan authorization and forms.
- **Grants.** Consult with the Curator before writing grant proposals that include use of the herbarium or its staff so that no protocols are violated that may hinder/prevent funding.
- **Non-departmental data acquisition.** Individuals needing information from herbarium specimens (e.g., locality data) but not involved with specific research in plant taxonomy will be allowed to use the collections on a limited basis under the supervision of herbarium staff. The herbarium reserves the right to charge fees for exceptional service.
- **Private Collections.** In accordance with our by-laws (and space/staff limitations), the GA Herbarium does not maintain private collections. All specimens housed in the herbarium are considered the property of the herbarium, with the exception of material borrowed via inter-institutional loan agreement. All material accessioned into the herbarium is the property of the University of Georgia.