



INSTRUCTIONS
Vascular Plant Herbarium
Botanical Museum, Finnish Museum of Natural History
P.O.Box 7, FI-00014 University of Helsinki

The collections of the Botanical Museum form the national herbarium of Finland. They give facilities and opportunity for research for the staff members of the Botanic Garden and Museum as well as for colleagues from other departments of the university and institutes from Finland and abroad. The collections should be preserved in good condition also for future research, and the specimens are in principle irreplaceable.

1. Handle the specimens carefully. It is advisable to take out the contents of a whole shelf (pile or box) at a time, and to handle it on a table. The sheets must not be bent, laid face downwards or tilted so that any loose parts would fall off. Put the sheets back in the folders evenly and in neat order. If the shelf has too many folders do not force them back but instead contact the staff.
2. Keep specimens in their original continent/country/province order. Take out any misplaced specimens and inform the staff. Do not mix specimens or put them in wrong folders.
3. Do not make corrections on labels, sheets or folders. Instead use separate identification and annotation labels. These can be purchased from the staff, who also sticks them on the sheets. You may also stick the determination labels yourself – ask staff for instruction and suitable glue. It is forbidden to use glue sticks or other plastic based glues, or adhesive labels.
4. All specimens you label with annotations should be given to the staff. Be especially careful with databased specimens (marked with "Catal." + year on the sheet), because all annotations should be added to the database. Be sure that you give any re-identified specimens to the staff for databasing and relocation. A misplaced specimen may be "lost" for years!
5. Identification of many specimens has not been made by specialists, and consequently you may even find serious misidentifications. The name that has been used might also be old. The Botanical Museum is grateful for your co-operation and corrections.
6. When you borrow specimens even for short periods for study inside the Museum put a "loan-slip" with your name, date, taxon name and the temporary placement of the specimens on the shelf, from which you took the specimens. This will both help you returning the specimens back in their correct place and inform anybody interested in the same material. However, it is forbidden to loan folders with their genus or species name slips; take out the taxon name slips and leave them on their correct places when needed. In case of re-identification of all specimens of a taxon, please inform the staff.
7. If you want to send specimens on loan to other institutes contact the staff.
8. It is strictly forbidden to take specimens or any part of them to other collections.
9. When you need specimens for "destructive" study (part of the specimen will be destroyed during the study) i.e. chemical, anatomical and other studies, please consult and obtain permission from the staff. Do never destroy the whole specimen (or for example all fruiting bodies of the specimen). Document the most important results of the destructive study on separate annotation labels to accompany the original specimen. When you need specimens for DNA study, ask the staff for separate rules for DNA sampling from botanical specimens.
10. In some cases all material of certain species is not in a single place. Please contact the staff, who can inform you of the latest additions and other special cases.
11. Smoking and other use of fire is strictly forbidden in the museum. It is also forbidden to keep food supplies or eat in the herbarium rooms – use the museum coffee room instead.
12. Specimens should not be preserved exposed to water, dust, fire or sunlight (please cover all specimens you leave on a desk with an empty sheet or keep them inside their folders). You should always provide the folders including the loaned material with temporary slips, which clearly indicate the origin of the specimens, together with your name.
13. It is strictly forbidden to take fresh material or material from other institutes directly to the Museum. All such material should be deep-frozen before further study. Please, consult the staff.
14. If you need to take photocopies, please consult the staff.
15. If you need to use a computer for network connections (e.g. for reading e-mail) or printing, you ought to have a user name and password from the data department of the Natural History Museum – please contact the staff.
16. If you are going to cite specimens by their sheet number, please use the form "H nnnnnn" or, in case of "Kymenlaakson herbaario" (annexed to Herbarium Fennoscandicum), "H-KYM nnnnnn".