

SMALL ENTOMOLOGY COLLECTIONS, HOW TO MANAGE

Christy Bills

Natural History Museum of Utah

Invertebrates Collections Manager

I'm tiny...and I manage
just fine.



Photo: Gavin Beck

- My background...Utah State University to University of Utah, Utah Museum of Natural History



← "database" on index cards, by family

What is a “small” collection?

- Numbers of specimens? 5,000 – 500,000?
- Staff? .5fte or one or two fte?
- **Self-defined**
- Where?
 - ▣ Museums, universities, field stations, nature centers, government agencies, private individuals



Benefits

- Possible to have a handle on what you have and locate specimens
- Feasible to digitize
- Need less \$ to manage
- Cozier, more approachable



Goal setting

- What is your collection focus?
 - ▣ What do the bugs need –
 - ▣ What do you want –
 - ▣ What does your institution want –
 - ▣ What does your community need –
 - ▣ What's the future of this collection?





Digitization

- Can be overwhelming!



Acronyms and “in speak”

BiSciCol

GUID

EoL

ICZN

TCN

SPNHC

SCAN

NSCA

ECN

GBIF

BISON

Geolocate

Filtered Push

DiGiR

ADBC

ESA

Darwin Core

ICE



<https://www.idigbio.org/wiki/index.php/Category:Glossary>

Digitization

- Can be overwhelming!
- But small collections have an advantage
 - leaner (tiger beetle vs scarab)

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- There are many options for databasing your collection





Promoting your Collection





Promoting your Collection

- Advocacy
 - ▣ Emphasize your institution's priorities
 - Consider making your own internal newsletter



INVERTEBRATE UPDATES - SEPTEMBER 2014



New Grant

Great news!! Our grant application to IMLS was successful and we have more funds to work on digitizing the butterflies and moths! This \$25,000 grant award will go toward a database specialist who will enter a century's worth of valuable

collection data. This database is entirely online, available to anyone who is interested, and is collaborative with other institutions. This type of meta data is invaluable to researchers studying large ecological trends over time.

Museum butterflies on display at the Art Building

Some U of U students put together a series of Mini displays in the art building. I gave them a hand with some of the objects and included some of our non-accessioned butterflies. They did a great job and our name figures prominently in the middle of this display.



Traveling Treasures in Heber

June and I had a great time doing a Traveling Treasures opening event in Heber. There were so many great families! We talked to lots of smart kids who were excited about bugs and educated many people about the insects and spiders of Utah. We brought a few live pinacate beetles with us who were big hits to be held and examined up close.

[Type text]

This month the inverts department had 40 volunteer hours, one outreach activity and one new grant.

new grant
award

on-campus
exhibit

outreach
activity

Sum of
volunteer
hours,
outreach
or tours



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- Advocacy
 - ▣ Emphasize your institution's priorities
 - Consider making your own internal newsletter
 - ▣ Learn how to write a press release



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Crazy About Bugs

August 11, 2011 by [Mark Salgado](#) [Leave a Comment](#)

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As soon as you start looking you'll notice, they're everywhere!

by Paige Wiren

The combination of crumbled dry earth and pebbles crunches beneath our feet with each step. Armed with an entomologist's tools—net, magnifying glass and clear vials—Christy scans the nearby grasses as she relates her introduction to the world of insects. "I played with potato bugs and daddy long-legs with my grandmother, but it wasn't until a high school biology teacher got me interested that I realized how cool bugs are. And think about it..." Christy begins, which is how we spent the waning hours of a warm summer bug-collecting night in the foothills above the avenues: thinking about the fascinating world of insects.

Christy Bills is [the entomology collections manager for the Utah Museum of Natural History](#) and she thinks about insects. A lot. "Did you know, there are more beetle species



GOOD 4 UTAH

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Natural History Museum Awarded Grant

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Natural History Museum of Utah nets massive butterfly collection

Nature • Late SLC doctor collected 16,000 specimens from around world.

Article Tools



BY BRIAN MAFFLY THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE
PUBLISHED MAY 3, 2012 10:15 AM

This is an archived article that was published on sltrib.com in 2012, and information in the article may be outdated. It is provided only for personal research purposes and may not be reprinted.

Sixty years ago, James Pearce spent his boyhood summers in Mill Creek Canyon with a gossamer net in search of large-winged insects.



Promoting your Collection

□ Advocacy

- Emphasize your institution's priorities
 - Consider making your own internal newsletter
- Learn how to write a press release

□ Partnering

- Are there other depts in your inst. with similar goals?
- Are there other institutions in your area with similar objectives?
- Are projects already afoot that you can join to reach your objectives?

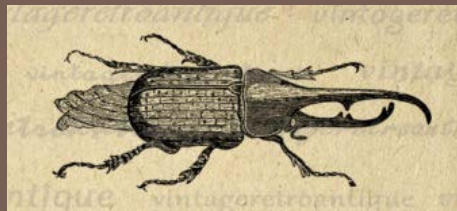
Community Partners

- Government agencies – extension offices, mosquito abatement agencies, forestry, dept of agriculture, health department
- Schools – high school, universities
- Student groups – scouting organizations, 4H, summer camps
- Outreach in the community – who is talking to the public? Libraries, career day fairs, community fairs and festivals



Volunteers

- Recruit
- Train – streamline, create written protocols
- Manage & Track – hours are valuable information
- Acknowledge – make sure volunteers know they are appreciated and keep track of their information



Funding Sources

- ❑ Internal institutional funds
- ❑ Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
- ❑ State museum, science or educational support
- ❑ Private donors



Grant writing

- There are grant writing classes offered at universities and libraries
- There are often samples of the grant you're applying for already online
- Find out who in your institution is good at grant writing and take them to lunch
- Don't have to do it on your own – partner to get funds



Learning more – tapping into knowledge resources

- Entomological Collections Network

- Email list: <http://ecnweb.org/listserv>



- Society Preservation of Natural History Collections



- iDigBio

- Natural History Collections listserv

- <http://mailman.yale.edu/mailman/listinfo/nhcoll-l>

- Attend conferences

Resources

- Entomological Collections Network: www.ecnweb.org and on Facebook and Twitter
- Collection Advocacy: <http://www.spnhc.org/media/assets/AMatterOfLifeAndDeath.pdf>
- Advocacy: <http://www.biology.ualberta.ca/uasm/alg/downloads/whywekillbugs.pdf>
- Digitization: <https://www.idigbio.org/>
- Database programs: <http://specifysoftware.org> <http://arctos.database.museum/> <http://scan1.acis.ufl.edu/>
- Invertnet: <https://invertnet.org/>
- GBIF: <http://www.gbif.org/>