

# Pre-Digitization Curation

Mobilizing Small Herbaria for Digitization  
Workshop sponsored by iDigBio, Florida State  
University, Tallahassee, Florida  
December 9-11, 2013

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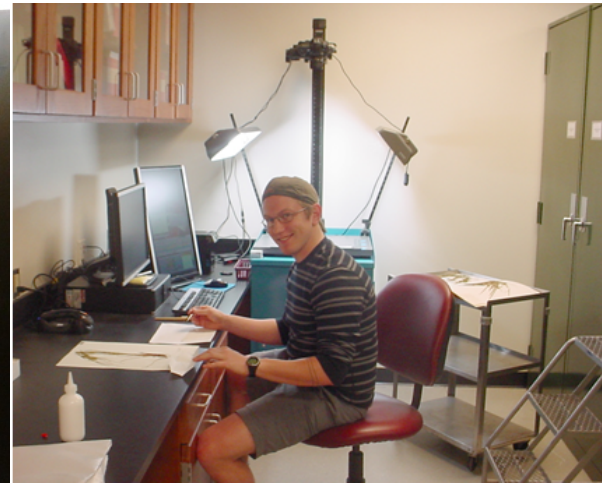
# The original idea

## ■ Prior to digitization

- ❑ First, the curator would check determinations and annotate specimens, family-by-family.
- ❑ Names would be updated on old folders as needed.
- ❑ New folders with geographically color-coded labels would be prepared, and specimens shifted to the new folders.

## ■ Digitization would follow.

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10 VSU undergraduate students properly trained in digitization techniques – *a very capable and eager bunch!*

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# Between the idea and the reality...falls the Shadow    T.S. Elliott 'The Hollow Men'

- Adhering to our original plan was simply not feasible. *I couldn't stay ahead of the student assistants!*
  - Adjustments were made.
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# The reality

- We decided to push ahead with both imaging and data entry, regardless of names on folders and specimens.
  - Rationale
    - In our Specify database, all specimen annotations are tracked, including the name of the annotator and the date of each annotation.
    - As nomenclature is updated, new annotations will be added to the database and designated as current names.
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# Some considerations

- Protocol development
  - What is realistic?
  - Flexibility
  - Communication
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# Protocols

- Help to insure everyone is on the same page
  - Help to maintain consistent standards
  - Allow greater peace-of-mind for all concerned
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# Consider developing protocols for

- Proper handling of herbarium specimens
    - Including use of fragment packets
  - Housekeeping in the herbarium
  - Attachment of bar-code labels
  - Imaging
  - Data entry
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# What is realistic?

- Varies from collection to collection
- Varies over time

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# Flexibility

- Be prepared to make adjustments to get the most out of the student assistants within the times they are available.
  - When possible, accommodate student schedules. *I frequently remind them that health and course-work come first!*
  - When possible, work with the strengths of each student and shift them toward tasks they do best.
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Data entry



Imaging



General curating

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# Effective communication is essential.

- e-mail
  - Posted notices
  - Place-markers
  - Designated computer folders
  - Meetings
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## e-mail

- Initial coordination of work schedules
- Misc. problems that need immediate attention

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# Posted notices

- We magnetically post laminated sheets for standard protocols, e.g., housekeeping.
  - We use plastic sleeves with magnetic backs to post temporary notices, e.g., work schedules, names of families that are ready for imaging and data entry.
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# Place-markers

- Color-coded drop-tags are useful to mark shelves inside cabinets so students know where to start (and stop) imaging and databasing.
    - Start imaging here
    - Start data entry here
  - We also use corresponding laminated, magnetic tags on cabinet doors, in combination with the drop tags inside the cabinets.
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# Place-markers.



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# Designated computer folders

- Commonly used documents and spreadsheets are kept in designated folders on the desktop of the computer.
  - Spreadsheets
    - ❑ To track output rates: Start and stop times and number of specimens databased or imaged
    - ❑ To track data-entry progress by family:  
Running list of families with completion dates for data-entry
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# Meetings

- Designate one hour each week when it is convenient for all to meet.
  - Have at least one group meeting per semester.
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# Acknowledgments

- VSU Student Assistants

- Jessica Bartek
- Amber Blocker
- Zach Buning
- Kyle Conger
- Terrance Jenkins
- Jordan Jones
- Christopher Louis
- Phillip Lowe
- Dennis May
- Amy Vardeman

- Gil Nelson for invaluable technical advice and assistance throughout

- National Science Foundation (DBI 1054366, J.R. Carter, PI)
- Valdosta State University

