Evaluation of a Scratchpad Template as an Online Database for the University of Guam Insect Collection

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Challenges

- Limited taxonomic expertise
- High endemism (~45%); many undescribed species
- Very high introduction rate for alien insects
Resources

• Limited Literature
  • Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association survey of 1936 published by Bishop Museum in Insects of Guam (2 volumes)
  • Bishop Museum surveys of 1950s and 60s published in *Insects of Micronesia*

• Entomological Collections
  • University of Guam
  • Northern Marianas College, Saipan
  • Palau National Museum
University of Guam Insect Collection
University of Guam Insect Collection

Curators
- Ross Miller, University of Guam
- Aubrey Moore, University of Guam

Board of Directors
- Richard Zack, Washington State University
- Robert Foottit, Agriculture Canada
- Robert Sites, University of Missouri
Digitization

• Initial attempts at specimen level databasing failed.

• All data lost due to hardware failures / defective back-up procedures
Digitization

BioLink®

- Biodiversity Information Management System provided free by CSIRO, Australia
- Development and support discontinued in 2005, however, BioLink has recently been reborn as an open source project
- Written in Visual Basic 6/C++ and sits on top a Microsoft SQL Server database
- Typically run in client / server mode on a LAN or Internet
Digitization

Current Status

- 30,000 pinned specimens have been given a unique identifier and are recorded in our BioLink database
Desirable Features for an Online Collection Database

- Free and open source
- Reliable data security / backup
- Flexible data security (user permissions)
- Web browser used for data entry and information delivery
- Specimen records compliant with Darwin Core
- Storage for images, bibliographic data, informal notes, etc.
- Data shared via GBIF
LifeDesks and Scratchpads

- LifeDesks is part of the Encyclopedia of Life Project.
- ScratchPads is a project managed by the Natural History Museum, London.
- Both are Drupal templates hosted for free.
- My evaluation sites are at:
  http://micronesiansinsects.lifedesks.org/
  http://guaminsects.myspecies.info/