Collections Management Panel Discussion

Peter Oboyski, UC Berkeley
David Furth, Smithsonian Institute
Christine Johnson, American Museum
Katrina Menard, Sam Noble - Oklahoma
Richard Brown, Mississippi State
Max Barclay, The Natural History Museum
Beulah Garner, The Natural History Museum

Entomology Collections Network 2014
Peter Oboyski
Collections Manager, Curatorial Supervisor

• 6,000,000 specimens, 50-80 loans per year
• Director & Associate Director
• 5 Museum Scientists (mostly 20% time each)
• 12 workstudy students (databasing), 5 volunteers
Discussion

• IPM in the absence of fumigants
• Packing & shipping
• Labels & printing
• Microscope slides
• Alcohol / fluid preservation
• Environmental Samples
• Role of Collections Manager
• Collections Management course?
Christine Johnson
Curatorial Associate
The American Museum of Natural History
Christine Johnson, Curatorial Associate (Collection Manager) since 2011  
Division of Invertebrate Zoology  
American Museum of Natural History  

**Insects, terrestrial arthropods, marine invertebrates**  
- ~23-25 million (pinned, dry, in fluid) specimens  
- ~1,450 cabinets  
- ~39,973 drawers or trays  
- ~96,000+ slides  
- 10 curators (6 organismal, 4 primarily genomics)  
- 2 active Curator Emeriti  
- 6 Scientific Assistants, 3 part-time Curatorial Assistants  
- Currently, some 38(?)+ databases for loan management & specimens (for the entire division)  
- In process of “installing” division-wide database (Emu) & migrating data
Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History

Katrina Menard

Recent Invertebrates Collection
Collection

- Around 500,000+ specimens
  - Mostly terrestrial insects
  - At least 100,000+ unprocessed mosquitoes
- Harley Brown Collection
  - 50% pinned, 50% in alcohol
- Groups in alcohol that need re-processing
Staff

- Assistant Staff Curator (100% Museum)
- Collection Manager (100% Museum)
- 4-6 volunteers
- 1-2 student workers (depending on funding)
Richard Brown
Director
Max Barclay & Beulah Garner
Curators
The Natural History Museum, London
IPM without fumigants
Packing & Shipping
Packing peanuts

Polystyrene vs Starch-based
• Ted MacRae’s online step-by-step instructions
• [http://beetlesinthebush.wordpress.com](http://beetlesinthebush.wordpress.com)
• Search “pack and ship insects”
Labels & Printing

- Laser jet printers
- Archival ink printers
- Thermal transfer printers
Paper & Ink

- Archival paper – Acid-free, high rag content
- Resistall paper – for wet collections
November 2012

95% ETH
Barcode Labels

• Symbology: Code 39, Datamatrix, QR code
• What to encode – catalog number, GUID, other?
• Printing: resolution, size
• Placement: top label, bottom label
Microscope Slides
Slide Labeling Solutions

- Cataloging slides: foil-backed archival labels
  - University Products: 387-3025 B.
  - Print the catalog labels onto the paper, foil layer self-adheres to glass. Archival.

- Electronic Imaging Materials, Inc.
  - Pre-printed custom barcode labels
  - Archival, alcohol resistant, “aggressive” adhesive
IPM without fumigants
Fluid (alcohol) preservation
• Alcohol monitoring system: Alcomon Tabs.
  – If both orange and maroon tabs are sunk, greater than 70% ethanol concentration
  – Orange tab up: near 50-60%. Both up...less than 50% ethanol.
Tabs kept in separate vial

All vials submerged in 75% ethanol

Pros: entire jar can be monitored

Cons: having vials in jar makes retrieval of specimens and organization of cataloged material challenging.
Environmental Samples: Destructive Sampling

Photo: Barta IV
Role of Collections Managers

- **Titles:**
  - Curator, Curatorial Assistant, Museum Scientist

- **Management**
  - Collections, People, Schedules, Purchasing
  - Images, Field Notes, Data, other archives

- **Outreach**
  - Tours, Preparing displays, teaching

- **Grant writing**

- **Training, volunteers**
Collections Management Course?

Collection of online resources?