Taxonomic Database Search v1.0.8

User Guide

# Introduction

The Taxonomic Database Search desktop application allows searches to be performed against the three taxonomy database sites, AmphibiaWeb, International Plant Names Index and The Reptile Database. These sites provided information on species and that information is presented as a list after a successful search. The results can then be exported for use in other applications (for example a spreadsheet). The results are not retained other than by exporting them.

# Requirements

The Taxonomic Search may be installed on either macOS Ventura (or better) or Window 8,10 or 11. On Windows, it installs for a single user with the data being held for that user only. To operate, a subscription is required to the ScrapingBee service, and the corresponding API key must be set as described in the section “Setting an API Key”.

A subscription to the ScrapingBee service can be obtained at: <https://www.scrapingbee.com>

With monthly subscription plans describe at: <https://www.scrapingbee.com/#pricing>

The pricing details section also gives details for obtains 1000 free API credits to try out the service before fully subscribing.

# Windows Installation

The Taxonomic Search application can be installed on 64-bit Windows 8, 10 or 11 by running the “SetupTaxonomicSearchWin64.exe” installation application. This application will guide you through the process of installation through a series of dialogues.

**Note** - The installation should be performed as the intended user for the software and *not* as an administrator. The very final stage of the installation may require administration privileges in order to install the “Visual C++ Windows Runtime Redistributable” if it is not already present but will prompt if required.

If the installation appears to stall on the last dialogue, then check the task bar for a confirmation to install the “Visual C++ Windows Runtime Redistributable”. This often takes the form of a blinking shield icon.

# macOS Installation

The Taxonomic Search application can be installed on macOS Ventura or later by copying or moving the “TaxonomicSearch” application bundle to a suitable folder (normally the “Applications” folder).

# Setting an API Key

This version of the Taxonomic Search desktop application requires that an API key is set in order to use the ScrapingBee service. To set this key, go to the “File -> Settings…” menu option in Windows, or the “TaxonomySearch -> Settings…” menu option in macOS, and set the key in the Settings dialogue that appears.

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated

Once the key has been entered in the “API Key” field, press the return key or click on the “Ok” button to set it.

The API key can be found at: <https://app.scrapingbee.com/dashboard>

# Setting the Default Country

The Default Country dropdown list in the Settings dialogue allows the selection of the country to use if no other is selected in the main window. Any search started in the main search window will then have the country field already set accordingly. The screenshot above shows the default country set to the United Kingdom.

No default country is set when the application is first installed. When no default country is set then the requests are made as if from the United States.

# Starting a Taxonomy Search

A new Taxonomy search can be initiated from the main application window (this is the first window displayed when starting the application).

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Simply enter the required search terms in the “Search Terms” field and then select the search site to search from in the drop-down list.

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Once both of these details have been entered, then the “Search” button will be enabled, and the search can be started by either pressing the return key or clicking on the button.

A progress wheel will be displayed while the search is taking place and all of the control on the window will be disabled.

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A list of results will appear, and all of the controls will be enabled once the search completes.

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# Extended Search Results

Most search results for taxonomy sites show two fields of information, “Name” and “Details”, but some show extended information. One such site is AmphibiaWeb, and it shows “Scientific Name”, “Red List Status”, “Vernacular Name”, “Family” and “Order”.

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Where extended fields are provided, they are honoured by the export feature.

# Exporting the Search Results

The “Export” button on the main window allows the results for an individual search to be exported in comma-separated values format (CSV). The file provides all of the fields that are currently shown in the search results list and also includes a header with the field names as the first row.

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Pressing the “Export” button will produce a dialogue allowing the file location and filename to be chosen. Pressing the “Save” button within that dialogue causes the export to be performed.