

11.3.1 What to include in your field notes?

- Collector's name(s) and number: always remember to include the names of any local people who assist you with the collection of the specimen. However, remember that the numbering series belongs to the primary collector; the other people are regarded as secondary collectors.
- Date of collection: if you are aware that the flowers of the plant you are collecting do not last for the full day (e.g. some species of *Xyris* and some aquatics), then record the time of collection as well.
- Locality of collection: the descriptive and spatial coordinates of the locality from where the plant was collected. Include:
 - Country.
 - Province/State/Territory—as formally recognized within the country.
 - Districts/SubDistricts—if formally recognized.
 - Special geographic areas—such as Conservation Parks, National Parks and other special reserves.
 - Description of specific locality—e.g. '5km W of Nauti, on road to Aseki'; '300m S of "Resting Place 2" on walking trail to summit of Mt Wilhelm'. Avoid imprecise descriptions of the locality like, 'near Wanang River', 'between Wail and Goroke', 'N of Ciawi'. Remember that the descriptive locality information is often more useful than anything else for relocating the organism.
- ↪ Altitude (m) and how measured, plus degree of precision (also in metres).
- Depth (m) and how measured—for aquatic plants, plus degree of precision (metres).
- Latitude and longitude (or geographical coordinates—eastings and northings): these geocodes should describe the locality as accurately as possible so that the collection site and the plant can be re-visited if necessary. The method used to generate the spatial geocode should be provided (e.g. GPS, Map, Gazetteer), the level of uncertainty of the geocode (in metres), and most importantly, the datum used for generating these spatial geocodes (most commonly, the datum for a GPS should now be set to WGS84). If maps are used to generate the geocode, then the map type, scale, map name, and map number should be provided.
- Habitat—a description of the specific habitat, including vegetation structure and composition (e.g. forest type and two or three of the names of the dominant species), substrate—rock and soil type (including name of host plant for climbers, epiphytes, and parasites).
- Habit notes: a description of the appearance of the plant are important for identification; features that may be distorted in the pressing and drying process or are not represented by the specimen collected should be recorded. Comments on the status of the plant at the collection site should indicate whether or not the plant is thought to be naturally occurring or has been introduced, and whether or not the plant is cultivated.
- Vernacular names and plant uses: vernacular names used by the local people (including the name of the language group). The name of the informant as well as his/her language group should be recorded. An audio recording of the vernacular name is preferable, but is rarely done by botanical collectors. If the plant is used by the local people, then this should be recorded, noting which part of the plant and what its uses are.