

Progress Report CF 2011-108

Provision of authoritative names of Western Australian taxa

Ecoinformatics

Project Core Team

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Project Team	granted
Program Leader	granted
Directorate	granted

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Context

The Department, academia and the community rely on authoritative species names to manage species databases. Without authoritative names, the ability to provide and integrate information is substantially impeded. WACensus, a database system, is the primary mechanism for managing those names. WACensus captures both current names and synonymies and information is disseminated widely throughout Western Australia. The Department assumes a leadership role in providing authoritative names to assist in bio-inventory of both plants and animals, and the delivery of high quality information to a range of clients. There is a need to provide a standard mechanism for collection and management of plant species information. Max is a species database management system that substantially improves data accuracy through facilitating the correct use of names, and promotes a standard database design integrated with WAHerb, the Western Australian Herbarium's specimen database.

Aims

- Provide accurate and timely information on the names of Western Australian taxa to assist in management of species databases within the Department and the wider community.
- Maintain updated species databases and provide facilities for entering specimen label information.

Progress

- WACensus re-architecture has commenced, making data more easily available to other applications and systems requiring authoritative taxon name information
- Smut names were added to WACensus
- Minor bugs have been fixed and enhancements implemented as required

Management implications

- The development of any database in the Department that involves plant species names needs to be linked directly to WACensus data so that nomenclatural changes can be taken into account.
- Max provides a standard mechanism for entering specimen data, as well as the capacity to check species names against the most authoritative source, thus enabling better integration of floristic information.

Future directions

- Continue with re-architecture of WACensus to make data available to external applications.
- Make use of Australian Plant Census (APC) and Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) online web services to reduce double-handling by Western Australian Herbarium staff.