

Progress Report CF 2011-110

The Western Australian Herbarium's specimen database

Plant Science and Herbarium

Project Core Team

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Project Team	granted
Program Leader	granted
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Context

The Western Australian Herbarium's specimen database (WAHerb) allows staff at the Herbarium to manage and maintain the Herbarium's collections, and provides core data on the distribution, ecology and morphology of all taxa for Parks and Wildlife and the community, through the FloraBase and NatureMap websites. Data from the specimen database is provided to researchers, consultants and community members on request, and to the Australian Virtual Herbarium (AVH), Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) and the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) on a regular basis.

Aims

Capture, maintain and validate spatial, phenological, population and habitat data for all the Herbarium's collections, enabling curation of the collection and providing core data for FloraBase and Parks and Wildlife decision support systems and research.

Progress

- 8732 records were added to the specimen database, including 961 Priority Flora and 211 Threatened Flora. The following projects and significant collections were databased: Herbarium staff and research associates, surveys by industry consultants, Parks and Wildlife surveys (Yilgarn Ranges Survey, Woylie Decline Project), Inocybaceae research by N. Bougher and general fungi collections.
- Regularly provided customised specimen data requests (species lists and label data) to Parks and Wildlife officers, researchers and the public.
- 727368 specimen records were edited during this period as part of activities aimed at ensuring the collection is scientifically valid, up-to-date and aligned with the Departments conservation codes.

Management implications

WAHerb represents the most comprehensive database on Western Australian plants available. This provides a source of information that managers can use for updates on biodiversity or conservation status, plant identification, clarification of plants in an area, and identification of knowledge gaps.

Future directions

Timely editing and validation of herbarium specimen records to maintain connectivity between the Herbarium collection, the Western Australian Plant Census and external databases including AVH and ALA.