

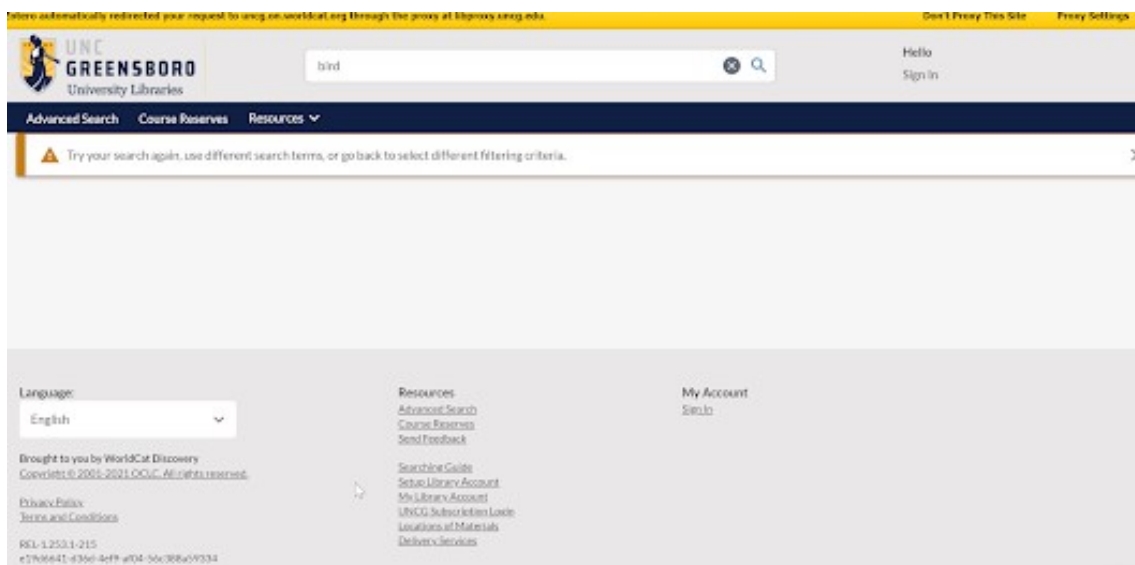
...The Ref Desk

An internal forum for communicating relevant information about new sources, and issues or challenging questions at the reference desk.

Monday, August 16, 2021

WorldCat Discovery error when searching

A number of folks are reporting an issue with WorldCat Discovery searches made using the red box on the library homepage when they are not on the campus network. When searching, they'll get an error message directing them to "try your search again..." even when they know there should be a search result.



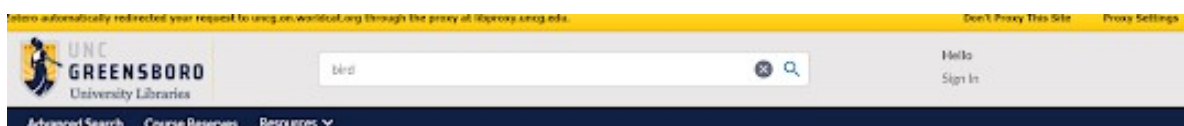
Most of these issues so far have been caused by proxy settings within the Zotero Connector plugin/add-on/extension, largely in Google Chrome but also in Mozilla Firefox, when someone is off campus.

If someone in the ref chat has this issue, **first** have them copy & paste the REL number at the bottom left of the page, and the full URL of the page into the chat. Send those to Lea (she's got a ticket open with OCLC about this). Then have them try the following:

A) Try the search again from the WorldCat Discovery results page instead of the red box (won't fix it, just will workaround it).

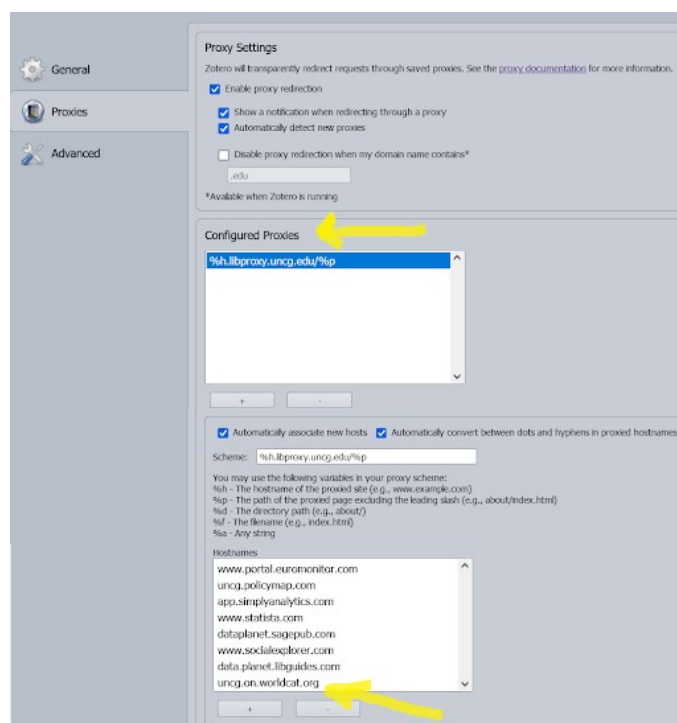
B) Click "Don't proxy this site" after getting a search error to automatically remove the proxy setting that's junking this up.

- This is in a yellow bar at the top of the window (see below).
- It won't always appear; if it doesn't, try the next step.



C) Manually remove any proxy settings in the Zotero Connector (see below) from the plugin/add-on/extension's settings/preferences, under "Proxies."

- You can delete just the "uncg.on.worldcat.org" hostname, which is what's causing the problem, or the entire "%h.libproxy.uncg.edu/p%" proxy.
- Make sure "automatically convert between dots and hyphens..." is checked (it's under the Configured Proxies box). This won't fix the issue, but will make sure you don't get a 404 error.



D) Disable or remove the Zotero Connector plugin/add-on/extension while searching the catalog from the red search box.

And if you think of it, please put "zotero connector" and "worldcat discovery" in some combination in the internal notes or description of the question in LibInsight so we can see how many of these we get.

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If you're also interested in why it's doing this, like I am:

The URL for the search is a hint as to what's going on (granted, a hint I don't fully understand).

- ✓ If I search and get results, the url is "uncg.on.worldcat.org/..."
- ✗ If I search and get the above error, the url is "uncg-on-worldcat-org.libproxy.uncg.edu/..."
- ✗ If I search and get a 404 error, the url is "uncg.on.worldcat.org.libproxy.uncg.edu/..."

The way that the url is being parsed through the "uncg.on.worldcat.org" hostname and "libproxy.uncg.edu" proxy is the problem. The red search box translates your search query into a URL and forwards it to WorldCat Discovery, but Zotero grabs it with the libproxy.uncg.edu proxy and redirects it to "uncg.on.worldcat.org." Shenanigans occur, and you get an error message.

This proxy setting used to work, and was a workaround for WorldCat Discovery not letting folks save items to Zotero using the connector. It looks like the workaround isn't needed for that in the new WorldCat Discovery, and the proxy does not like the red search box. Jury's still out on whether the proxy is needed for other things, and whether there's a fix that doesn't involve disabling it.

Posted by [Jo Klein](#) at [6:58 PM](#) 

1 comment:



Steve Cramer August 17, 2021 at 8:56 AM

"Shenanigans occur" (-;

Thank you for the useful post!