

Lab 15: Specimen Databases

Introduction

Last week you examined several different online databases during lab. Today we're going to continue with that theme, but focus specifically on specimen databases.

Exercise 1: Specimen Databases

Jepson Herbarium:

<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/consortium/>

Essig Museum of Entomology:

http://essig.berkeley.edu/resources/collection_databases.shtml

University of California Museum of Paleontology:

<http://ucmpdb.berkeley.edu/>

Museum of Vertebrate Zoology:

<http://www.vertnet.org/index.html>

Global Biodiversity Information Facility:

<http://www.gbif.org/>

AND

<http://www.gbif.org/species>

Question #1: Examine each of the databases listed above. Are there any features of each database that are not always available in the others? (ie. What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of each database?)

Question #2: Look up your taxon of interest in the appropriate database. Generate a distribution map using the tools available in the database. Do the same using GBIF. Are there differences between the two? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these tools? What caveats of the specimen data should you keep in mind when viewing these maps?