

University of Idaho Stillinger Herbarium

Access and Usage Policy

The University of Idaho Stillinger Herbarium (ID) is a collection of preserved plant specimens including approximately 160,000 vascular plants, 10,000 bryophytes and lichens, and 16,000 fungi. The majority of these collections are from Idaho.

Since its foundation over one hundred years ago, the herbarium has been the official state repository for plant specimens and is located in the College of Natural Resources, room 22. The mission of the University of Idaho Stillinger Herbarium, consistent with the conditions of the Charles R. Stillinger trust, is to maintain and expand the collection to make it the most thorough representation of Idaho's flora possible. Furthermore, the Stillinger Herbarium seeks to foster research that improves knowledge of Idaho's flora. The collection is intended to be used for teaching, research and public service, and voucher specimens from any project funded by the Stillinger Trust must be deposited in the University of Idaho Stillinger Herbarium.

I. Herbarium Access

- a. The ID Herbarium is open to the public from 9 am to 4 pm weekdays or by appointment. All users are welcome and fees are not charged.
- b. Vandal card access to the College of Natural Resources after hours is only available to the Herbarium Director, the Herbarium Manager and Curator, and the Graduate Assistant.

II. Herbarium Etiquette

- a. All visitors to ID are asked to sign the guest book.
- b. Visitors are expected to replace specimens used for study and clean their work area.
- c. Herbarium cabinets should be left open for a short a time as possible in order to limit the entrance of insects. Cabinets must be closed as soon as specimens are removed.
- d. Carts and foot ladders should be removed from the aisles when not in use.
- e. Before using the compactor system, aisles must be checked for people.
- f. Visitors planning to use the collection for longer periods of time may request temporary storage space from the director.

III. Specimen Handling

- a. Specimens should be handled in a manner that will conserve them for future study. Entire folders should be removed from cabinets, rather than individual sheets.
- b. Materials may be removed for molecular or anatomical study only with the permission of the director or associate curator.
- c. Annotation of specimens by competent botanists is appreciated. Permanent ink and ID annotation labels are provided.

IV. Plant Identification

The identification of plant specimens is an important service provided by the herbarium staff. Due to limited resources this service requires the following restrictions:

a. In case of medical emergency, identifications of suspected poisonous plants will be promptly attended to. All other identifications will receive priority by firstly, urgency of request, and secondly, date submitted for identification.

b. Plants to be identified may be submitted in any form. Identification will be greatly facilitated if well-preserved or fresh, flowering material is submitted with complete label data.

c. In general, specimens will not be identified for "for-profit:" purposes.

d. Plants sent in for identification will not be returned to the sender, unless special arrangements have been made.

e. Although every effort is made to insure the accuracy of identifications, the University of Idaho Stillinger Herbarium assume no liability for the consequences of misidentification.

f. We are not able to certify mushrooms as edible.

V. Herbarium Accessions and Deaccessions

Specimens added to the herbarium collection originate from staff collections, donated specimens from state and federal agencies or private individuals including professional botanists, and exchanges from other herbarium. The acceptance of any specimen into the collection is subject to the approval of the Herbarium Director.

a. Specimens incorporated into the herbarium collection must be of high quality. In general, only complete, well-preserved specimens with full label data will be accepted.

b. Specimens from Idaho and the Pacific Northwest will take priority over specimens from other areas. However, specimens from all geographic regions may be incorporated into the collection.

c. The herbarium encourages the deposition of "research voucher specimens" into the collection when appropriate. Research vouchers must meet the same standards of quality applied to all other specimens. A specimen which is incomplete, poorly preserved, or lacking accompanying data is of limited value to other researchers and defeats the purpose of depositing vouchers.

d. Duplicates of specimens incorporated into the collection will be included in the exchange program with other institutions

e. Specimens should be submitted in newsprint with label. The University of Idaho Herbarium will be responsible for curation.

f. Accessioning must be recorded in the accession book with the date, number, collector and person doing the accessioning.

g. Deaccessioning of specimens is the responsibility of the director and associate curator. Accessioned duplicates, and specimens of not scientific value, should be brought to their attention for possible deaccessioning.

VI. Specimen Loan and Borrowing Policy

A. Loans of specimens are made only to recognized institutions of botanical research. Loans are for a period of twelve months. An extension of twelve months may be requested in writing to the Herbarium Director.

b. Specimens may be temporarily removed from the collection for display or teaching purposes only with the permission of the Director or Curator.

c. The graduate student curator will be responsible for the paperwork and monitoring of the loan and exchange program.

d. The ID Herbarium, as do most institutions, expects that the borrower will identify and annotate the specimens before return. If specimens are to be used for DNA extraction or other destructive sampling, this will require the permission of the loaning institution.