

## LOANS TO FLAS: CHECKLIST FOR UNPACKING AND COUNTING

It is important that all details in these directions are followed faithfully.

- **All incoming loans must first be frozen** and thawed in accordance with our fumigation policies.
- **Open the box using care** not to slice specimens which may be packed in the top or along the edges of the box. Try to preserve the box for returning the loan.
- **Save non-organic styrofoam chips** in a bag in the mounting room or in the loan box. There are ways to differentiate the corn starch chips. Please ask, if you do not know how. You can discard all chips if they are mixed.
- **Save all packing materials** except for newspapers used to bundle specimens. The specimen covers (white folded papers or newspapers), if removed from the sheets (see below), should be stored in the loan box.
- **Open the specimen bundles.** If a specimen count is marked on the bundle take note of the count.
- **Handle the specimens with great care.** Do not turn sheets upside down. Do not get stray marks on them.
- **Count the specimens;** match the count with numbers written on the bundles, if the bundles are numbered. Be aware that sheets may contain more than one specimen and you may need to count both sheets and specimens. Count the specimens again; just because the count matched the first time, doesn't mean it is correct. The sheets are sometimes separated from the newspapers they are packed in. This is done on a case-by-case basis; ask the researcher working with the material.
- **Check for institutional identifying marks.** While counting, or via a second pass through the specimens, examine the institutional accession seal.
  - ✓ If the specimen has a seal for a different institution than where the loan is from, set it aside. It is possible sheets got mixed from previous loans. The lender will need to be notified.
  - ✓ If no seal is present, pencil the acronym of the lending institution on the bottom left of the specimen.
  - ✓ If directed to do so, lightly pencil the correct acronym for the institution on the bottom left of all sheets. Don't write on type specimens unless they have no institutional identification. If the loan already has the acronym and sheet number written on the sheet you don't need to write it again. The investigator will usually be the one responsible for doing this
- **Stack the specimens on cardboards and tag the cardboards** with the correct acronym of the lending institution, loan number, month/year, name of investigator, project and count. The tags should be written on the end of 8 1/2 X 11 paper folded in half lengthwise.
- **Group the specimens by genus and tally each genus.** This can be done during the unpacking or the review process below. Note, this is not always necessary, but is a preferred practice.
- **Review the specimen conditions** (you may do this while counting the specimens). Examine the specimens and make notes on our "Loan Condition Report" of the following:
  - ✓ lack of accession seal or any marks which identify the institution from where the loan originated. Lightly pencil the official herbarium acronym on the bottom left of these sheets.
  - ✓ visible damage and insect activity.
  - ✓ tears in the sheets.
  - ✓ missing pieces as evidenced by shadows on the sheet or obviously broken off.
  - ✓ moldy material.
  - ✓ major discolorations.
  - ✓ Only record very major obvious problems. There is no need to record every little detail. Sheets will have some discolorations and smudges. Generalized notes may be included such as: many specimens with top left corners bent; many sheets with obvious water damage.
  - ✓ If there are only a few sheets in the loan, the notes may be made directly on the loan paperwork.
- **Match up all inventoried specimens with the inventory provided on the loan paperwork.** The inventory may just be a count. The count may be broken down by genus or species. In some cases each individual specimen/collection number will have to be checked off. Make a list of anything you may find confusing.
- **Repair all specimens as necessary.** Fix tears in sheets, place loose pieces in packets, be sure not to mix debris from one sheet to another. Add strips to sections falling off. All repairs should be consistent with the style of mounting used by the institution lending the material. If you are uncertain about this, please ask the Collection Manager.
- **Re-usable boxes and packing material should be saved,** otherwise make a note on the loan paperwork that it was discarded. **Each box should be marked** on the end with the acronym of the lending institution, loan number, name of investigator, brief project descriptor and box number of total number of boxes abbreviated as 1/4. The boxes should be placed in the appropriate storage area. All other packing material should be disposed of in the recycle or trash.
- **The loan must be stored in a standard metal herbarium cabinet.** The specimens must be treated with the utmost of care as detailed in our specimen handling and loan guidelines.