

The EMBL Herbarium

EMBL Archive, 2020

Introduction

The EMBL Herbarium is a collaborative project run by the EMBL Archive to document the plant life at EMBL's sites. This document outlines the procedures and ethical considerations of this activity.

Procedures

The Following apply to all EMBL sites. If you are a volunteer at an EMBL site, please contact the EMBL Archivist (archive@embl.org) to obtain materials needed to proceed.

Collecting

Specimens for the EMBL Herbarium will be collected by volunteers at each EMBL site. Best effort will be made to collect good quality specimens. The EMBL Herbarium will, in the first instance, only collect herbaceous plants, cutting from trees and shrubs and seaweed and aquatic plants.

Use clippers or a pocket knife when making cuttings, and dig around the specimen carefully when collecting a whole plant.

Place the specimen in a plastic bag or flat between sheets of newspaper.

Specimen drying and mounting

The specimens will be dried in a common herbarium press. Once the specimen is dry, it will be mounted on acid-free paper, labelled and given a specimen ID.

If the specimen is collected at a site other than EMBL Heidelberg, please mail the specimen to the EMBL Archive (Meyerhofstraße 1, 69117 Heidelberg, Germany) where it will be mounted by the EMBL Archive.

Information

Collectors will try, to the best of their ability, to provide information about the following for each specimen collected:

- Common Name: the name by which the plant is commonly known, in English or in the language local to where the specimen was collected.
- Scientific Name: the scientific name of the specimen.
- Location: where the specimen was collected, e.g. campus, city, country. GPS coordinates if desired.
- Habitat: a description of the habitat where the specimen was collected, e.g. woodland, desert, beach...


- Date of Collection: the date of collection, in a YYYY-MM-DD format
- Collector: name of the person who collected the specimen
- Identifier: name of the person who identified the specimen

In addition to all this information, the EMBL Archivist will assign each specimen with an identifier.

This information will be centralised in a spreadsheet made accessible to all sites but owned by the EMBL Archive.

Labelling

Specimens in the EMBL Herbarium will be labelled with the following (or a similar) label, printed on acid-free paper.

EMBL 	
EMBL HERBARIUM	
EMBL Archive, Meyerhofstrasse 1, 69117 Heidelberg, Germany	
Scientific name.....	
Common name.....	
Location and habitat.....	
Collector(s).....	
Identifier(s).....	
Date.....	Specimen ID.....

Ethics

The collection of specimens needs to be done with respect for the private property and for the laws governing the parks, nature reserves and preservation zones. Please do not collect a specimen from private land (unless specific and documented authorization is provided by the landowner to the EMBL Archive.)

References

This document is based in large part on the information provided by the Herbarium Louis-Marie Herbarium at the Université Laval, Canada: https://www.herbier.ulaval.ca/en/a_propos/confectionner_un_herbier/.