

Entomological Collection Accessions Policy

The ETHZ Entomological Collection accepts donations and bequests of insect specimens, collections and associated material including diaries, photographs, correspondence, reprints and entomological books. Collection staff are available to visit collections and assess the suitability for ETHZ and/or to make recommendations. Acceptance of collections is based on several criteria as follows:

- **Does the collection complement the holdings of ETHZ Entomological Collection in terms of the geographical distribution of specimens, the taxa represented, or the collection theme?** Our first priority is endemic Swiss insects followed by Central European, European and Palearctic collections. Specimens from other biogeographical regions may be acceptable depending on the taxa or current research interests. Focal taxa include but are not limited to Lepidoptera, Coleoptera, Hymenoptera and Diptera – specialist collections of other taxa are also desirable. Thematic collections such as insects associated with certain habitats, gradients, or other special areas of research are also welcome.
- **Do specimens have accurate and reliable collection data?** Specimens without accurate locality data and date of capture have little or no scientific value and will not normally be acceptable. Any such specimens included in collections may be deaccessioned at the discretion of the Curator. Specimens with less than complete data, but having educational value, may be accessioned but may not be catalogued by ETH.
- **Are the specimens identified and sorted?** For the most part, collections should be identified to species and sorted to higher taxonomic groups. Some unidentified specimens are expected, but largely unidentified or unsorted collections are not normally acceptable.
- **Are the specimens well presented and well preserved?** Ideally, specimens should be prepared correctly (pinned, pointed, carded, etc.) and well preserved with minimum damage from handling, mould, pest species (e.g. museum beetles and psocids) or other environmental damage (e.g. UV). Alcohol collections, slides, Riker mounts and papered collections are also acceptable.

- **Are any type specimens included?** Deposition of type material is encouraged.
- **Are there historically or culturally important specimens?** Items of significance may include specimens collected by famous people or from populations now extinct.
- **Is the size of the collection manageable?** Very large collections may require special approval from [ETH school/managing board](#).
- **Have all the specimens been collected/obtained legally?** CITES listed species must have CITES permits or be eligible for pre-CITES certificates. Other locally protected species must pre-date legislation or be covered under collection permits issued by the relevant authorities. Some of these conditions may be relaxed under certain circumstances, e.g. inherited collections or collections currently in Switzerland.
- **Does the donor place undue restrictions on the use of the collection?** With few exceptions all acquisitions are considered to be unconditional. The ETH Entomological Collection normally cannot accept collections on which the owner has placed restrictions that would prevent effective research examination, normal exhibition use, or loan. This includes a condition that the physical collection should be kept together permanently or displayed only as a discrete unit.
- **Is the donor offering support funds?** Additional funds accompanying a collection to offset the costs of transport, curation, housing, digitization and ongoing expenses are welcomed. This can take the form of one-off or periodic contributions, but is not a prerequisite for accepting a collection. Under certain circumstances ETH may purchase important specimens, collections or archival material.

Depositing a collection at ETH Zurich will ensure its future security and ongoing value to the scientific community. Incoming collections will be integrated into the main ETH collection since it is not in the interest of museums to maintain multiple separate collections particularly when material is duplicated. The process of integration may take years or decades, but before any integration is commenced every specimen will have a unique collection label attached, thus ensuring that specimens from a particular collection are always identifiable. Furthermore, ETH Zurich is embarking on a digitization program to photograph every specimen together with its pin labels and to publish the images in an online database. Thus the integrity of a 'collection' will be permanently maintained digitally.

Notebooks and diaries associated with a collection will be stored as a permanent archive that can provide a wealth of scientific and historical data for research by history of science students, or for detailing the collection owner's contribution to the ETH Collection and to Swiss entomology. The ETH Entomological Collection can provide digitized copies of diaries if necessary.

Legal requirements for donating a collection include a simple donation contract with ETH. ETH legal office can prepare the document and will include any special instructions as agreed. A full inventory or valuation is not required; however, it may be necessary for ETH collection staff to estimate a monetary value for [ETH school/managing board approval](#). Valuation of collections for taxation purposes is the responsibility of the donor.