Herbarium

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The specimens may be whole plants or plant parts; these will usually be in dried form mounted on a sheet of paper (called exsiccatum, plur. exsiccata) but, depending upon the material, may also be stored in boxes or kept in alcohol or other preservative. The specimens in a herbarium are often used as reference material in describing plant taxa. Some specimens may be types, some may be specimens distributed in published series called exsiccatae.

The term herbarium is often used in mycology to describe an equivalent collection of preserved fungi, otherwise known as a fungarium. A xylarium is a herbarium specialising in specimens of wood. The term hortorium (as in the Liberty Hyde Bailey Hortorium) has occasionally been applied to a herbarium specialising in preserving material of horticultural origin.

Virtual herbarium

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In botany, a virtual herbarium is a herbarium in a digitized form. That is, it concerns a collection of digital images of preserved plants or plant parts. Virtual herbaria often are established to improve availability of specimens to a wider audience. However, there are digital herbaria that are not suitable for internet access because of the high resolution of scans and resulting large file sizes (several hundred megabytes per file). Additional information about each specimen, such as the location, the collector, and the botanical name are attached to every specimen. Frequently, further details such as related species and growth requirements are mentioned.

Kew Herbarium

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The Kew Herbarium (herbarium code: K) is one of the world's largest and most historically significant herbaria, housed at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in London, England. Established in the 1850s on the ground floor of Hunter House, it has grown to maintain approximately seven million preserved plant specimens, including 330,000 type specimens. The herbarium's collections, which include specimens dating back to 1700, represent about 95% of known vascular plant genera and 60% of described fungi, with specimens collected over 260 years of botanical exploration. The herbarium processes around 5,000 specimen loans annually and hosts approximately 3,000 visitor-days of research visits each year, supporting a wide range of botanical research.

The herbarium's development has been closely tied to British botanical exploration and colonial expansion, with contributions from influential directors like Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker and major acquisitions including the Gay Herbarium. Research at the herbarium has contributed to botanical taxonomy, with publications such as the Index Kewensis, initiated with funding from Charles Darwin in 1882, and the Kew Record. The

facility has undergone several major expansions since its first purpose-built wing was constructed in 1877, with Victorian architecture that includes spiral staircases, iron columns, and vast handcrafted wooden cupboards. In 2022, the herbarium initiated a £29 million digitisation project to produce high-resolution images of its collection, with a target completion date of 2026.

The herbarium is a resource for botanical research in taxonomy, conservation, ecology, and climate science. Its specimens offer data that aid in tracking environmental changes, studying plant diseases, and identifying new species, as demonstrated by the 2022 discovery of Victoria boliviana, the world's largest water lily species, which had remained unrecognised in the collection for almost two centuries. The herbarium's future is currently subject to debate, with controversial plans announced in 2023 to relocate the collection to Thames Valley Science Park, prompting discussion about the balance between preservation needs, research accessibility, and maintaining the historic connection between the herbarium and Kew's living collections.

National Herbarium of the Netherlands

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The National Herbarium currently consists of two branches:

Leiden University

Wageningen University and Research centre.

The Utrecht herbarium has been closed and in 2009 its stock was transferred to Leiden, where it is curated by the Naturalis Biodiversity Centre.

It is planned that Naturalis (the Netherlands' Natural History Museum and Centre for Biodiversity) will run the National Herbarium.

The NHN coordinates several flora projects. "Flora Malesiana" and "Flora of the Guianas" have their seat in Leiden, while the "Flore du Benin" and "Flore du Gabon" are coordinated from Wageningen.

Herbaria of several classic botanists are in the collections, e.g.

David de Gorter

National Herbarium of New South Wales

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The National Herbarium of New South Wales was established in 1853. The Herbarium has a collection of more than 1.4 million plant specimens, making it the second largest collection of pressed, dried plant specimens in Australia, including scientific and historically significant collections and samples of Australian flora gathered by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander during the voyage of HMS Endeavour in 1770.

The Herbarium is a centre for Australian plant research. These specimens are used for studies of Australian native plants, their relationships and classification. A botanical information service is also provided including native plant identifications.

The National Herbarium is in the Robert Brown Building at the Royal Botanic Garden on Mrs Macquaries Road in Sydney. In June 2018 plans to relocate the Herbarium to a new purpose built Centre of Innovation in Plant Sciences to be at the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan were announced.

In addition to two journals, Telopea and Cunninghamia, the herbarium is responsible for the online database (and keys) to NSW Flora, PlantNet.

The Index Herbariorum Code for the National Herbarium of New South Wales is NSW.

Australasian Virtual Herbarium

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The Australasian Virtual Herbarium (AVH) is an online resource that allows access to plant specimen data held by various Australian and New Zealand herbaria. It is part of the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA), and was formed by the amalgamation of Australia's Virtual Herbarium and NZ Virtual Herbarium. As of 12 August 2014, more than five million specimens of the 8 million and upwards specimens available from participating institutions have been databased.

Hong Kong Herbarium

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The Hong Kong Herbarium was established in 1878. It has a collection of about 48,000 plant specimens and is responsible for the systematic collection, identification and curation of specimens representative of the Hong Kong flora.

Kew Gardens

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Kew Gardens is a botanic garden in southwest London that houses the "largest and most diverse botanical and mycological collections in the world". Founded in 1759, from the exotic garden at Kew Park, its living collections include some of the 27,000 taxa curated by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, while the herbarium, one of the largest in the world, has over 8.5 million preserved plant and fungal specimens. The library contains more than 750,000 volumes, and the illustrations collection contains more than 175,000 prints and drawings of plants. It is one of London's top tourist attractions and is a World Heritage Site.

Kew Gardens, together with the botanic gardens at Wakehurst in Sussex, are managed by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, an internationally important botanical research and education institution that employs over 1,100 staff and is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The botanic gardens at Kew formally started in 1759, although they can be traced back to the exotic garden at Kew Park, formed by Henry, Lord Capell of Tewkesbury. The site now consists of 132 hectares (330 acres) of gardens and botanical glasshouses, four Grade I listed buildings, and 36 Grade II listed structures, all set in an internationally significant landscape. Kew Gardens is listed Grade I on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Kew Gardens has its own police force, Kew Constabulary, which has been in operation since 1845.

Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden

relevant books is available for researchers. The Compton Herbarium was founded after the Bolus Herbarium moved from Kirstenbosch to the campus of the University

Kirstenbosch is a botanical garden nestled at the eastern foot of Table Mountain in Cape Town. The garden is one of 10 National Botanical Gardens covering five of South Africa's six different biomes and administered by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). Prior to 1 September 2004, the institute was known as the National Botanical Institute.

Kirstenbosch places a strong emphasis on the cultivation of indigenous plants. When Kirstenbosch was founded in 1913 to preserve the flora native to the South Africa's territory, it was the first botanical garden in the world with this ethos, at a time when invasive species were not considered an ecological and environmental problem.

The garden includes a large conservatory (The Botanical Society Conservatory) exhibiting plants from a number of different regions, including savanna, fynbos, karoo, and others. Outdoors, the focus is on plants native to the Cape region, highlighted by the spectacular collections of proteas. It is a level IV accredited Arboreta by the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and The Morton Arboretum.

List of herbaria

is a list of active herbaria, organized first by continent where the herbarium is located, then within each continent by size of the collection. The

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