

Herbarium Techniques

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The collection or depository of dried plant specimen is known as herbarium. The objectives of collecting plants in the field and preserving them in the herbarium are "to preserve for all times a series of specimens and notes that will yield the maximum of information about the plant concerned."

Some technique employed for the collection and preservation of the flowering field equipment.

While planning a field — for the study of the vegetation and flora of an area the following are the essential items which are indispensable for plant collection.

(i) Plant press →

Several types of plant presses are used for drying and preserving flat fresh specimen for this work. Plyboard frames of 30 by 45 cm are used.

(ii) Field note book →

An important part of plant collection is recording of field data at the time of collection that is pocket size.

(iii) Vasculum →

The vasculum is a container made of tin sheet and it has a ~~big~~ hinged tight lid. It is oval on the ends and usually 45 to 60 cm long.

(iv) Digger →

A suitable digger is required to take out the underground plants of herbaceous plant.

(V) Secateurs and pruning shears →

Secateurs is required for cutting twigs of trees and shrubs for herbarium specimens and pruning shear is very useful for cutting twigs from tall trees.

* Collection of plant specimens →

The following things should be kept in mind while collecting plant specimen for making herbarium.

(i) The plant specimen should be either in the flowering or the fruiting condition, preferably both.

(ii) Herbaceous plants should be collected with underground parts.

(iii) Woody plants a twig of about 25 cm will form a good specimen.

(iv) Each should be numbered and detailed note entered in the note book.

(v) The specimen could be pressed in the field as they are collected or they may be kept in a vascular and brought to the computer and then pressed there.

* Pressing of specimen →

The specimen should be carefully displayed on the pressing sheet avoiding or hiding of parts, larger plant should be bent into 'V' narrow shape. They should be placed for pressing such a way that the bundle are of uniform thickness in the middle and on the sides.

* Drying specimen →

For drying the press

containing them is placed in the sun the press is opened 24 hr. the rearranged.

* Mounting of specimens →

After drying they are ready for mounting the mounted on 28.75 by 41.28 cm size herbarium sheet attached the specimen to the sheet.

Before mounting the specimens are scened by dipping them in a saturated sol^m of mercuric chloride in ethyl alcohol. Lauryl pentachloro phimate is a safer substitute of mercuric chloride.

* Herbarium Labels →

After mounting the specimen a label is glued on the lower right hand corner of the sheet. The label provides information taken from the field note books.

The label should include at best the following data.

1. A heading indicating the name of institution with which specimen originated and the regions of the collection.
2. The name of the family.
3. Name of the plant with authority.
4. The locality of collection.
5. Sape.
6. Habitat.
7. Field notes.
8. The name of the collection.
9. Collector's field number.
10. The vernacular name and local uses →

Since herbarium specimen are permanent collection they require proper

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