

## **Acquisition Policy of the New England Botanical Club – Vascular Plant Herbarium**

This statement of policy has been prepared to provide information about the NEBC Vascular Plant Herbarium (NEBC) and the ways that collectors can help to improve the representation of the diversity and distribution of the spontaneous flora of New England. **Collectors are urged to contact the Curator before submitting specimens to the Herbarium.**

The purpose of the herbarium is to support scientific research on plant systematic and ecology. The NEBC vascular plant herbarium, in combination with the New England collections of the Harvard University Herbaria, represents the largest collection of New England plants available to researchers. The major objectives of the collection are to represent the diversity of plants occurring spontaneously in New England, and to accurately represent the historic and current distribution of those taxa. The herbarium also serves as a repository for voucher specimens documenting published systematic and ecological studies, including floristic surveys, studies of invasive taxa, and species of conservation concern. The NEBC welcomes additions to the Herbarium that support our mission.

Herbarium specimens provide information about species diversity and geographical distribution, and provide phenological, ecological and taxonomic data. The NEBC collections, although large, were primarily collected prior to 1950 and often lack detailed locality and habitat data or field observations of characters not readily apparent from the dried specimen (size, growth habit, odor, flower color). Priorities for adding to the Herbarium include:

- Under-represented parts of New England;
- New records at the regional, state or county level;
- Under-represented taxa ;
- Woody plants in winter condition;
- Adventive and invasive species;
- Species of conservation concern (federally-listed, state-listed, watch-listed), when collected under appropriate state or federal scientific collection permits;
- Type specimens;
- Voucher specimens for published scientific studies<sup>1</sup>.

### **General Acquisition Policy**

The NEBC Vascular Plant Herbarium is eager to accept type specimens, new state or county records, invasive species, species of conservation concern, and specimens specifically cited in scientific publications, as well as specimens that contribute to our current understanding of plant diversity and distribution in New England. Material added to the collection should be adequate for defining geographic distribution and should provide high quality research material.

The Herbarium Curatorial staff and committee will review donated specimens to determine if they:

- Meet the minimum standards for a specimen and documentation; and
- Contribute to the current knowledge of the distribution and diversity of the taxon in New England.

Specimens that do not meet the minimum standards or do not contribute to the scientific mission of the NEBC Herbarium will be returned to the donor or offered to other herbaria to support their collections of the New England flora.

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<sup>1</sup> NOTE: Publications should state that vouchers have been deposited in the New England Botanical Club Herbarium at Harvard University (NEBC). Authors should contact the Curator prior to publication.

## Standards

All specimens must meet these requirements before they are considered for addition to the NEBC Herbarium. Optional standards are presented in italics.

- Specimens must have been collected in New England.
- Specimens must represent the spontaneous occurrence of the plant (not grown in gardens or cultivation).
- Specimens must contain sufficient information to identify the species, generally flowering or fruiting material and vegetative material. In some instances, vegetative material alone is sufficient for identification. *Herbaceous plants should include roots or rhizomes, particularly in groups where growth form is an important diagnostic feature.*
- Specimens must be properly pressed.
- Labels must be typed (printed) on heavy acid-free paper and must contain sufficient information, including:
  - State, county, municipality;
  - Name of the collector (and *collection number*);
  - Date of collection;
  - Accurate location data (*GPS coordinates, location relative to roads, etc.*);
  - Scientific collection permit number (for state or federally protected species);
  - *Elevation*;
  - *Substrate characteristics (hydrology, soil type, rock outcrops, exposure)*;
  - *Plant community characteristics (dominant co-occurring species)*;
  - *Information on the plant and its population (growth form, height, size of the population, dbh of the tree) as well as other information not readily visible on the specimen (drooping lower branches of a tree, aromatic bark, flower aroma)*;
  - *Other observations (pollinators, herbivory, flowering time of day, etc.)*.

A sample label is provided below.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>PLANTS OF MASSACHUSETTS</b>  |             |
| <b><i>Carex lupulina</i> Muhlenberg</b>   |             |
| NORFOLK COUNTY: Needham, Town Forest, Horsford Pond, 0.1 mi SSW of intersection of Central Avenue and Marked Tree Road.   |             |
| Lat. 42° 16' 29.61" N: Long. 71° 15' 24.65" W.  |             |
| Plants abundant, growing in shallow water around edges of small shallow pond, with <i>Carex crinita</i> Lam., <i>Lycopus</i> sp., and <i>Osmunda regalis</i> growing higher on banks. |             |
| Lisa A. Standley 223345   | 4 July 2011 |