



Policy on the Destructive Sampling of Herbarium Specimens

The collections of the Yale University Herbarium (YU) are maintained with the goal of balancing preservation of the integrity of herbarium specimens with utilization for scientific research. While every effort will be made to accommodate researchers, decisions concerning destructive sampling are made on a case-by-case basis. As a rule, no material may be removed from specimens without prior consent of the Curator or Collections Manager. Permission for removal of material, when given, is contingent upon adherence to the following guidelines:

1. Leaf material, pollen, spores, fungal tissue, bryophyte stem segments, etc. may be removed from specimens *only* when there is adequate material available. Care must be taken not to damage the scientific value of the specimen.
2. Material may not be removed from type collections, from historical specimens, or from taxa represented in the herbarium by less than 3 collections, except in rare instances, and then only by an appropriate staff member.
3. Each specimen must be annotated indicating the material removed, the nature of the study, the researcher's name and institutional affiliation, the date and the identification of the specimen accepted by the researcher. The Yale University Herbarium should be cited in any resulting publication.
4. Material may not be removed from an herbarium sheet for a second time, if the nature of the study is the same. Exceptions may be made when there is additional leaf material for DNA studies associated with the specimen.
5. Depending on the nature of the study, the researcher must return to the Yale University Herbarium a duplicate permanent pollen, spore, anatomical or leaf slide, an SEM photograph, etc. Such material will be housed with like material in the herbarium, cross-referenced to the specimen from which it was removed, and made accessible to other researchers as requested.
6. Requests for removal of material for molecular studies will be reviewed by the appropriate herbarium staff. Requests should include an estimate of the amount of material needed. Results (both positive and negative) must be reported in writing, preferably on an annotation to be attached to the specimen; specimens must be annotated with the identification of the specimen accepted by the researcher as well as with the nature of the study. The Yale University Herbarium reserves the right to request DNA or sequence material originally obtained from YU specimens.
7. For large or complicated requests for material for DNA extractions or other studies, researchers will be encouraged to come to YU, using their own funds, to select specimens for sampling themselves. Although specimens may be selected by the researcher, removal of material will be made with supervision and approval of the appropriate staff. Not only does this reduce the work required of the curatorial staff, but it allows the investigator to make more precise selections based on specimen age, material in packets, etc., and verify the identity of specimens being sampled.
8. The Yale University Herbarium maintain no records on the history of specimen collection or treatment methods; materials are supplied with no warranty of any kind.