

Role Description: Herbarium Curation volunteer

8.2022

Overview

The lichen herbarium at the Field Museum has ~150,000 specimens. A large portion of specimens are mounted on large herbarium sheets which take up three times more space than packets. To make more room for an ever-growing collection, there is urgent need to convert thousands of sheets into packets. Upon conversion, the specimens need to be curated and prepared for integration into the main herbarium.

Position Description

Volunteers will assist with the conversion of specimens mounted on large herbarium sheets into smaller packets. This basically involves 1) cutting labels and specimens off the sheet, 2) gluing the label to a new packet, 3) folding packets, and 4) placing the specimen inside. Specimens will be placed on the shelves alphabetically by genus and species names in a designated staging area before final integration into the main collection.

Volunteer qualifications

- Strong attention to detail – when cutting specimens and their labels need to be kept together. If separated, it is very difficult to match them back up again.
- Arts and crafts skills – there will be a lot of use of sliding paper cutters and scissors and gluing of labels on to packets. Labels and barcodes need to be applied in an orderly and professional manner.
- Strong organization skills – for arranging converted specimens back on the shelves and labelling of shelves to aid in quick recovery of a specimen if needed.

Hours and time commitment

- Wednesdays 9am-3pm for initial training. Other days of the week (Monday thru Friday) once able to work independently.
- Volunteer shifts are during regular weekday business hours of 9am-5pm.
- A minimum time commitment of one four-hour shift per week for 6-8 months is required.

Education/Experience

- High School graduate
- Experience organizing and labeling many items.
- Experience with following work flows.