

Usage policy

The College of the Atlantic and Acadia National Park herbarium (HCOA) is an archive of material from plants and plant allies from the nineteenth century to the present. Everyone is welcome to visit, whether as a student or a seasoned researcher, however, specimens are valuable records of distribution, morphology, phenology, and health of plants throughout New England over time and you must treat them accordingly. The herbarium is open by appointment through the curator. If you are a COA student, you may also contact an undergraduate curatorial assistant (listed on our webpage) for access or arrange a visit through your professor if connected with a botany class.

Using the HCOA facilities

- * Sign in and out of the logbook for each visit.
- * All visitors must understand and follow the protocol for handling specimens.
- * Food and drink are not permitted in the herbarium or while using collection materials.
- * No live material is allowed inside the herbarium. Use the botany lab to compare live material to specimens.
- * Keep cabinet doors closed, except when opening and closing for specimen access.
- * Visitors may be asked to relocate to the botany lab if space is limited. Herbarium specimens may move freely between these two rooms.
- * Herbarium material may not leave the Arts and Science building without being checked out under the loan policy.
- * Herbarium material is not allowed in the greenhouse due to heat and humidity.
- * Reference non-ACAD specimens whenever possible.
- * Ask a herbarium worker if you cannot locate a specimen or require other assistance.

Handling HCOA specimens

Mounted specimens are called “sheets,” which are stored in “folders.” Acadia National Park specimens are labeled “ACAD” and are in folders marked with a red rectangle in the lower left corner. Each ACAD specimen has a stamp in the upper left corner with an ACAD number.

* **Ensure that sheets are face up and flat at all times.** Do not turn them like pages in a book or fold them to fit under a dissecting microscope. If microscope examination is necessary, use the scope in the herbarium which is designed to accommodate the entire sheet.

* **Carry folders with the flat side parallel to the ground.** When taking a folder from the block in the cabinet, remove the entire block and set folders aside until you find the one you need.

* **Do not tap or force the sheets to restore a square edge to a folder.** This can dislodge delicate specimens and any fruits. Instead, stack sheets as neatly as you can before returning to the cabinet.

* **Do not place anything on top of sheets and folders except other sheets and folders.**

* **Report any pest or fungal infestations to the curator.**

* **Do not alter specimens without prior permission.**

* **Use fragment packets to preserve loose material.** Visitors may not remove material without permission however plant fragments may come loose. Place these inside a fragment packet paper clipped to the sheet and set aside for curatorial attention.

* **Do not reshelve sheets.** Curatorial assistants will take care of this to ensure no sheets are lost.

Annotations

HCOA welcomes annotations to help keep our collections correctly identified and up to date. All annotations should be made on an annotation label and paper clipped to the sheet for curator verification.

Loans and Destructive Sampling

Visitors are responsible for understanding our loan and destructive sampling policies which they may request a copy of. Material may not leave the Arts and Science building without being checked out and destructive sampling requires curator permission.

Publications

HCOA should be acknowledged in all publications when HCOA specimens are used. Digital copies of all publications are greatly appreciated and may be sent to the curator.

Revised 16 November 2016