

Department of Environment and Conservation

# Flora Conservation and Herbarium Program: Science Division

Western Australian Herbarium



Department of  
Environment and Conservation

*Our environment, our future*



## Scope

The Western Australian Herbarium houses the State's collection of scientific specimens of plants, algae and fungi, which underpins their conservation. The herbarium is responsible for:

- documenting and understanding the diversity of Western Australia's plants, algae and fungi;
- maintaining a research and archive collection of specimens of all species in these groups from throughout their range in Western Australia;
- helping community, industry and researchers understand and identify plants, algae and fungi;
- contributing to, supporting and servicing the research, conservation and decision-making activities of the state government; and
- contributing to taxonomic research by Australia's and the world's scientific community.

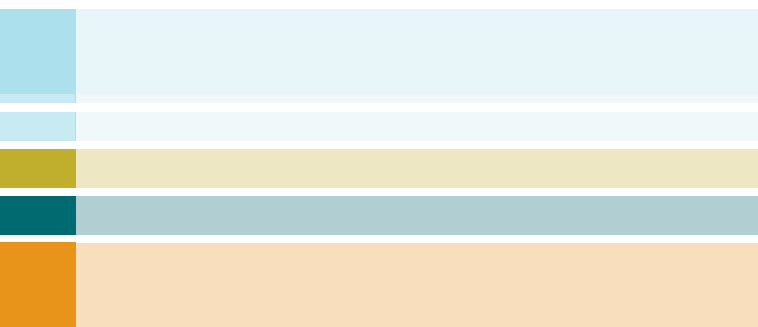


In 2008 the Herbarium collection comprised almost 700,000 specimens. On average, 20,000 new specimens are added to the Herbarium each year, collected by Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) staff, consultants, university researchers and members of the public.

## What we do

- **Manage and maintain specimens of plants, algae and fungi for study.**  
Herbarium staff collect specimens in the field, and maintain specimens collected by others, for scientific research and study.
- **Describe and document the State's flora.**  
Taxonomists at the Herbarium and in other herbaria in Australia and around the world use the collections and field research to describe new species, understand the distribution and variation in existing species, and build knowledge of the relationships of species to each other and to the environment.
- **Maintain the authoritative Census of Western Australian Plants.**  
The census lists all plant species native and naturalised in Western Australia. Herbarium staff keep the census accurate and up-to-date. The census serves as the basis for research, policy and conservation of the State's flora.
- **Maintain the Public Reference Herbarium.**  
The Public Reference Herbarium is a public-access collection of typical specimens of all known plant species in the State. It is used widely by consultants, researchers and the public to help identify wildflowers and other plants.
- **Maintain FloraBase ([www.dec.wa.gov.au/florabase](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/florabase)), a comprehensive botanical information portal.**  
FloraBase is an easy-to-use and popular website that provides information on all known species in the State, with distribution maps, photographs, short descriptions and other information. FloraBase can also be queried to produce lists of species for individual regions of the State and includes electronic identification keys to many families and genera.





**For more information** (or to use the Public Reference Herbarium or State Collection, at the Western Australian Herbarium) **contact**

Herbarium Curator,  
on (08) 9334 0500,  
email [herbarium@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:herbarium@dec.wa.gov.au)  
or visit DEC's website [www.dec.wa.gov.au](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au).