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Survey of Research Systematics Collections Initiated: Your Participation is needed!

The Association of Systematics Collections has developed a **Survey of Research Systematics Collections and Information**, the results of which will be made available to users of systematics resources over the world wide web. We hope that your institution will participate in the survey, so that information about your institution and its resources can reach colleagues worldwide. Participation in the database will give your institution higher visibility with government agencies and the public, and may lead to new opportunities. And it will help ASC document needs and develop policy options for governments and the private sector, with respect to collections.

This on-line database is a modern approach to providing the same kind of data ASC has collected in the past. In fact, responses to this survey will eventually become part of a longitudinal series of data. You may respond to the survey by contacting ASC for a form, filling it out and mailing or faxing it back. Or PREFERABLY, you may go to ASC's web site (<http://www.ascoll.org/SURVEY/>), download the survey, fill it out, and mail or fax it back to ASC.

All ASC member institutions, and collections that have previously participated in ASC institutional surveys, received copies of the survey in October. Each administratively-separate collection is to complete the survey and return it to ASC as soon as possible. Although ASC's initial distribution of the survey has focused on North American institutions, ASC is willing to include information from institutions outside the region, if they ask to participate.

The collections resources database is the second of two that are **sponsored by the Biological Resources Division of the USGS** (formerly the National Biological Service) in cooperation with a group of 6 US federal agencies and the Smithsonian-NMNH, which compose the Interagency Taxonomic Information System (ITIS). Many federal agencies and other resource management organizations have a strong need for taxonomic information or services that are scientifically credible and readily accessible. The Research

Collections and Information Database (RCID) will provide an entry point for these many users.

The first database, the Taxonomic Resources and Expertise Directory (TRED), has already been distributed, and the responses are now being entered into the database. TRED will be available for searching on the internet at <http://www.itis.usda.gov/itis>. For more information about ITIS, including the data categories it will contain, we encourage you to access this web site. If you have not provided data for the TRED, please call up the ASC web site for information and a copy of the survey.

Send the Completed Research Systematics Collections Survey and TRED to:

Association of Systematics Collections
1725 K Street NW, Suite 601,
Washington, DC 20006-1401
Phone (202) 835-9050 Fax (202) 835-7334
email- asc@ascoll.org

WANTED

Bolton Museum would be interested in loaning a Crown of Thorns Starfish and tourist souvenirs made from coral and other reef species for a temporary exhibition (May-August 1997) on The Conservation of Coral Reefs.

Tel: 01204 522311 ext 2197

APOLOGY

Due to circumstances beyond our control issue 7 was not sent out in time to allow a response, before the closing date for the advertisement for Curator (Dept. of Botany at the Natural History Museum).

