

National Herbarium of Victoria (MEL)

Loan Conditions

Loans from the National Herbarium of Victoria (MEL) are subject to the following conditions. Once a loan is approved, the researcher(s) must complete a MEL Loan Agreement to confirm that they have read and agree to the loan conditions. Any variation to the loan conditions requires written approval from the MEL Collections Manager.

Storage and handling

1. Loaned specimens must be stored in a 'clean area' that is free of insects and other pests, with conditions controlled to inhibit insect activity and fungal growth (16-21°C and less than 50% RH).
2. Specimens must be handled appropriately and kept in their original folders or packets.
3. Specimens must not be subjected to fumigation, microwaving or irradiation.
4. Specimens must remain at the receiving institution. Written permission must be obtained from the MEL Collections Manager before specimens are transferred to another institution.

Removal of material

5. Removal and dissection of parts or extraction of pollen/spores from non-type specimens is permitted for normal taxonomic descriptive purposes, but only when the tissue or organ is in sufficient quantity to leave similar material on the specimen intact. Material must not be removed from type specimens.
6. Specimens must not be destructively sampled for SEM preparation, DNA extraction, chemical analysis, etc. without a Destructive Sampling Agreement and written permission from the MEL Collections Manager or designated MEL curatorial staff.
7. Duplicate specimens must not be removed.

Photography

8. Specimens may be photographed for research reference purposes only. Written permission must be obtained from the MEL Collections Manager before images are used in any publication.

Citation and acknowledgement

9. Researchers should make efforts to ascertain the conservation status of taxa under study. Many Australian taxa are conservation-listed at a national or state/territory level. For such taxa, particularly 'sensitive' taxa that are likely to be subject to heavy amateur or commercial collection, localities should be cited with some circumspection. In such cases, consideration should be given to generalising a locality (e.g.: 'E of Cann River', rather than '17.8 km E of Cann River on Princes Hwy') while retaining enough other data in the citation to allow unambiguous identification of the specimen.
10. MEL must be acknowledged in any publications that present results derived from the loan specimens. A copy of the publication(s) should be sent to MEL.

Return of loan

11. Loans should be returned as soon as possible after the completion of study, and within the specified loan period (generally 12 months). Extensions may be granted on request.
12. Where possible, loans should be returned in their entirety. Partial returns may be acceptable and should be negotiated with the MEL Collections Manager.
13. Specimens should be returned by traceable mail, and securely packaged to prevent damage in transit.
14. Quarantine requirements exist for the return of specimens from outside Australia. Refer to the MEL loan documentation for details.



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