

Statement on Collecting

Adopted by the Executive Council: 13 June 1996, Houston, Texas

The Lepidopterists' Society affirms that collecting Lepidoptera is one of many legitimate activities enabling professional and avocational lepidopterists to further the scientifically sound and progressive study of Lepidoptera and education about Lepidoptera as well as encouraging interaction between professional and avocational lepidopterists.

The foregoing Statement of The Lepidopterists' Society is accompanied by the following Collecting Guidelines. The Guidelines elucidate the manner in which collecting should be conducted. Practitioners are encouraged to adopt these Guidelines and to use the Guidelines for the instruction of others.

Collecting Guidelines

PREAMBLE

Our responsibility to assess and preserve natural resources, for the increase of knowledge, and for the maintenance of biological diversity in perpetuity, requires that lepidopterists examine the practices of collecting Lepidoptera for the purpose of governing their own activities.

To this end, the following guidelines are outlined, based on these premises:

- 0.1 Lepidoptera is one of the largest order of insects. Lepidopterans are an important component of biological diversity.
- 0.2 Lepidoptera are conspicuous and scientifically well known, thus they are frequently used as indicator groups for conservation programs.
- 0.3 The collection of Lepidoptera
- 0.31 is a means of introducing children and adults to awareness and study of their natural environment;
- 0.32 has an essential role in the elucidation of scientific information, both for its own sake and as a basis from which to develop rational means for protecting the environment, its resources, human health, and the world food supply;
- 0.33 is an educational activity which generally can be pursued in a manner not detrimental to the resource involved.

PURPOSES OF COLLECTING

(consistent with the above):

- 1.1 To create a reference collection for study and appreciation.

- 1.2 To document regional diversity, frequency, and variability of species, and as voucher material for published records.
- 1.3 To document faunal representation in environments undergoing or threatened with alteration by humans or natural forces.
- 1.4 To participate in development of regional checklists and institutional reference collections.
- 1.5 To complement a planned research endeavor.
- 1.6 To aid in dissemination of educational information.
- 1.7 To augment understanding of taxonomic and ecologic relationships for medical and economic purposes.

COLLECTING METHODS:

- 2.1 Collecting adults or immature stages should be limited to sampling, not depleting, the population concerned. Numbers collected should be consistent with the purposes outlined in sections 1.1 through 1.7.
- 2.2 Where the extent and/or the fragility of the population is unknown, caution and restraint should be exercised.

DATA SHARING:

- 3.1 All data should be recorded, and the data should be made available to appropriate interested parties.

LIVE MATERIAL:

- 4.1 Rearing to elucidate life histories and to obtain series of immature stages and adults is to be encouraged, provided that collection of the rearing stock is in keeping with these guidelines.
- 4.2 Reared material in excess of need should be released only in the region where it originated, and in suitable habitat.

ENVIRONMENTAL:

- 5.1 Protection of the supporting habitat must be recognized as the sine qua non of protection of a species.
- 5.2 Collecting should be performed in a manner such as to minimize trampling or other damage to the habitat or to specific foodplants.
- 5.3 Property rights and sensibilities of others must be respected.

- 5.4 Collectors must comply with regulations relating to publicly controlled areas, to individual species, and to habitats.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTED MATERIAL:

- 6.1 All material should be preserved with all known data attached.
- 6.2 All material should be protected from physical damage and deterioration, e.g. light, molds, and museum pests.
- 6.3 Collections should be made available for examination by qualified researchers.
- 6.4 Collections or specimens, and their associated written and photographic records, should be willed or offered to the care of an appropriate scientific institution, if the collector lacks space or loses interest, or in anticipation of death.
- 6.5 Type specimens, especially holotype or allotype, should be deposited in appropriate scientific institutions.

RELATED ACTIVITIES OF COLLECTORS:

- 7.1 Collecting should include permanently recorded field notes regarding habitat, conditions, and other pertinent information.
- 7.2 Recording of observations of behavior and of biological interactions should receive as high priority as collecting.
- 7.3 Photographic records, with full data, are to be encouraged.
- 7.4 Education of the public regarding collecting and conservation, as reciprocally beneficial activities, should be undertaken whenever possible.
- 7.5 All known data should be recorded with the specimens, e.g. date, location, collector, habitat, larval host plant data, and parentage of immatures, when known.

TRAFFIC IN LEPIDOPTERAN SPECIMENS:

- 8.1 Collection of specimens for exchange or sale should be performed in accordance with these guidelines.
- 8.2 Rearing of specimens for exchange or sale should be from stock obtained in a manner consistent with these guidelines, and so documented.
- 8.3 Mass collecting of Lepidoptera for commercial purposes and collection of specimens for creation of saleable artifacts are not included among the purposes of the Society.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- 9.1 Collectors should comply with local, state or provincial, federal and national, and international laws and regulations that govern collecting and possession, commerce and exchange, import and export, and protection of species. Collectors should comply with additional local, state or provincial, federal and national, and international laws and regulations governing live material.