



Loan Policy
Division of Invertebrate Zoology
The Field Museum of Natural History
1400 South DuSable Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60605-2496 U.S.A.
(Updated 29 August 2023)



Request a Specimen Loan

Submit loan requests to the [Collection Manager](#). In a single email, include your full name (if you are a student or postdoctoral researcher, include your advisor or permanent faculty member, their name, and position), position, institution, shipping address, phone number, a detailed description of your proposed research project including the data to be collected from loaned specimens, and the taxa and number of specimens requested (please use our online database served at [FMNH](#) and/or [GBIF](#)). Loan requests are reviewed by the Invertebrate Zoology Collections Administrative Team (CAT).

All borrowers must comply with the following FMNH IZ Loan Terms

- Loans will not be approved for shipping during the month of December.
- CITES protected taxa will not be loaned internationally.
- Loans are sent with an accompanying invoice which lists the contents of the loan. On receipt, the borrower verifies that the invoice completely and accurately lists the material received, indicates the condition of material, signs the invoice, and returns a copy of the invoice to the Collection Manager via email (scanned invoice) or mail.
- Loans are not to be forwarded to third parties without our advance written permission. Researchers with outstanding loans must inform the Division of Invertebrates before moving to a new institution.
- Researchers wishing to interact with IZ primary types should ideally do so on site at FMNH but short-term loans (3 months) may be approved under certain conditions.
- Other specimens are loaned for periods up to one year.
- At the end of the loan term the borrower must return the material or request an extension. No new loans are made to a borrower with an overdue, outstanding loan.
- Specimens are not to be altered without prior written permission. Such alterations include, but are not limited to: tissue clips, coating, dissection, embedding/sectioning, destructive sampling, cleaning (especially removal of tissue remains), highlighting, etc.
- Molecular sequencing of loan material can only be attempted with prior, written approval.
- Borrowers are responsible for maintaining the appropriate level, concentration and type of preservative of all wet loan material. Preserved wet material is maintained in 70% ethanol unless otherwise stated. Labels are not to be discarded, damaged or altered.
- New identifications and other annotations are to be written in pencil or indelible black ink on archival quality paper and must be accompanied by the FMNH catalog number, the name of the researcher and the year when written. Archival label paper is available from the Division upon request.

- As a courtesy, borrowers are asked to identify all loaned specimens or verify their identifications. Any observed discrepancies in label information should be noted; such notes will be gratefully received.
- All loan material must be returned. If specimen(s) were dissected, all parts must be returned, unless prior written permission indicates otherwise.
- Publications based in full or in part on a loan from the Division of Invertebrates must acknowledge the Field Museum. The material used shall be identified by the institutional acronym FMNH in combination with the individual catalog numbers (e.g.: FMNH 123456).
- If DNA/RNA sequences are analyzed based on Field Museum material, the results shall be submitted to NCBI (GenBank, SRA, etc.) mentioning the catalog numbers of the FMNH voucher specimens (e.g.: FMNH 123456).
- We request copies of any publication-quality images taken from our specimens for our use (if necessary and appropriate, after their formal publication by the borrower).
- We request that a physical and/or electronic reprint of each publication that is based in full or in part on an FMNH loan be sent to us for our divisional library.
- Failure to follow these loan conditions may result in the loss of loan privileges for the borrower and/or the institution with which they are affiliated.

Loan Returns of Type Specimens

Primary type material is sent domestically by UPS Ground and internationally by FedEx. Loans must be returned at the borrower's expense by the same or equivalent means by which they were received. Returns containing new type material should be returned by UPS Ground (Domestic) or FedEx (International).

Loan Returns of Fluid Preserved Specimens

If specimens are fluid preserved, they must be packed following DOT and IATA Special Provision A180. Specifically, wet specimens must be wrapped in paper towels and/or cheesecloth moistened with the fluid preservative they arrived in and then heat-sealed in a plastic bag. Any free liquid must not exceed 30 mL per heat-sealed bag. The heat-sealed bags containing the specimens then need to be heat-sealed in a second bag with absorbent material. Tissues and small specimens may be housed in a vial with less than 30 mL of fluid preservative and placed in two nested heat-sealed bags. The total volume of flammable liquid must not exceed one liter per package. Packages are then marked on the outside 'Scientific research specimens, not restricted - Special Provision A180'. The Air Waybill must include the above information.

Domestic Loan Returns

Borrowers are responsible for paying return shipping charges and packing specimens with adequate material to protect specimens against damage during shipment. Use of the packing material used for the incoming shipment is recommended. Domestic loans can be returned by parcel post or carrier (UPS preferred) and addressed to the collection manager.

International Loan Returns

Borrowers are responsible for paying return shipping charges and packing specimens with adequate material to protect specimens against damage during shipment. It is recommended to use the same packing material that was used for the incoming shipment. All international shipments must comply with national and international laws and regulations for the international trade of wildlife. It is the borrower's responsibility to return borrowed specimens in compliance with these laws and regulations. International loans are sent by air mail or carrier, such as UPS or FedEx, and addressed to the collection manager. Please provide the carrier with our FMNH phone number: 312-665-7818.