

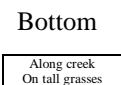
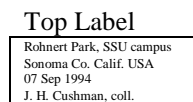
Insect collection assignment

Introduction

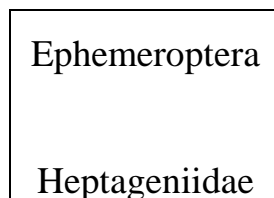
You will soon begin assembling your insect collection and become familiar with the joys and tribulations of using dichotomous keys to identify your insects. Later in the semester, expect that you will have time during each laboratory session to work on preparing and identifying your insects. Bring specimens to lab! I will be available during the laboratory to discuss your specimens. I will provide passes for students who wish to work on their collections outside of normal laboratory hours.

Labeling

Specimen labels- Labels should usually be printed on white card stock (stiff paper) using 5 point Times font. You can obtain card stock from the SSU Copy Center and print labels at the Media Center. If you write your label by hand, use India ink and a fine drawing pen (e.g. Reprograph pen), or a quality fine point pen and make your label completely legible. Identify the location as precisely as you can, and include information about the habitat where you collected the insect. Your labels should not be too large, and you should use the pinning block to place the insect and its labels at the right location along the pin. In your label, indicate the month as an abbreviation of the name of the month (e.g. Sep) or as a Roman numeral (e.g. IX). Sample labels are shown:



Taxonomic labels- On the bottom of each pinned specimen, where the pin meets the surface of the collection box, indicate the taxonomic group to which your specimen belongs. Use 14 point Times font and provide sufficient space so that the order and family name can be easily seen below your specimen and its labels. Make sure you spell each name correctly!



Specimen arrangement- Arrange specimens by order and family. The orders should be arranged in the same order shown in the Table of Contents in Bland and Jaques. Families should be arranged alphabetically.

Collection Requirements

Your collection should include at least 45 adult insects (5 immatures must be identified to order). It should include 50 species distributed among 25 families within at least 12 orders. You may submit at most 2 specimens that have been prepared on microscope slides¹ and up to 8 insects in alcohol² (at least 40 specimens must be pinned). Refer to Bland and Jaques (pp. 13-24) or ask your instructors if you have any questions about how to preserve an insect specimen.

What is due on 26 October (50 pts)- Submit 50 insect specimens. You must include the correct label with an identification of the insect to order. You will receive one point for each correctly identified specimen. Points will be deducted for incorrectly identified specimens. Up to ten points will be deducted if your specimens are poorly labeled and/or poorly presented. If you wish, you can submit identifications to the family level. I will provide overall comments on your family identifications and specimen presentation, but I will not verify the family identifications. I will not deduct points for not satisfying the requirements for number of orders and families at this time.

What is due on 9 December (50 pts)- Submit 50 insect specimens for evaluation. You must identify each adult specimen to family and each immature specimen to order. You will probably want to use some different specimens for final submission than you used for your initial submission. You will receive one point for each correctly identified specimen, and zero points for incorrectly identified specimens. As before, up to ten points will be deducted if your specimens are poorly labeled and/or poorly presented. At this time, I will deduct points for not satisfying requirements for number of orders and families.

¹ Specimens from the following groups may be prepared on microscope slides: fleas (Siphonaptera), thrips (Thysanoptera), lice (Mallophaga and Anoplura), and some small flies (Diptera).

² You may preserve the following insects in 70% alcohol: Ephemeroptera (mayfly larvae), Odonata (larvae), Trichoptera (caddisfly larvae), Plecoptera (stonefly larvae), Coleoptera (aquatic beetle larvae), Collembola (springtail adults), Thysanura (silverfish adults), Isoptera (termite adults), some Hemiptera (Coccoidea and Aphidoidea adults), some Orthoptera (Jerusalem Crickets).