

# Hollister Herbarium Access and Visitor Policy

*Research educational and public access policy*

|                            |                                                     |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Administrative unit</b> | Department of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences |
| <b>Policy owner</b>        | Director and Curator, Hollister Herbarium           |
| <b>Approval authority</b>  | Department of Biology and Tennessee Tech            |
| <b>Effective date</b>      | June 1, 2026                                        |
| <b>Review cycle</b>        | Every three years or sooner if requirements change  |

## Commitment to access

HTTU provides responsible access to its collections for research, teaching, conservation, and public education while protecting specimens, confidential information, and the safety of visitors and staff. Access is normally by appointment and depends on staffing, space, collection condition, and the purpose of the visit.

## Scheduling a visit

- Contact the Director and Curator in advance and describe the purpose, requested dates, people attending, taxa or geographic area of interest, and any equipment or accommodation needs.
- Research visitors should normally provide at least ten business days notice. Classes and groups may require additional planning.
- HTTU may limit the number of visitors, duration, specimens consulted, or activities allowed. Visits may be postponed because of teaching schedules, staffing, construction, pest response, emergencies, or collection risks.
- Children and organized groups must remain with responsible adult leaders and HTTU staff.

## Accessibility and reasonable alternatives

HTTU welcomes visitors with disabilities and asks visitors to describe needed accommodations when scheduling. The collection room has narrow aisles that may not accommodate all wheelchairs or mobility devices. When direct cabinet access is not physically possible, staff can provide an equivalent collections-based program in an accessible room, retrieve requested specimens for supervised study, provide digital images or remote consultation, or arrange another reasonable format in coordination with Tennessee Tech. Accessibility needs will not be used to deny participation in the educational or research purpose of a visit.

## Visitor registration and supervision

- Visitors sign in, review handling rules, and follow staff instructions. Research visitors may be asked to provide institutional affiliation and identification.
- Collection areas remain locked or supervised. Personal bags, coats, food, beverages, plants, soil, and unnecessary equipment stay outside collection work areas or in a location designated by staff.
- Only pencils, laptops, cameras, and approved equipment may be used near specimens. Pens and liquids are not permitted at specimen tables.

- Visitors may not remove specimens, fragments, labels, folders, annotations, or associated records without written authorization.

## **Specimen handling**

1. Work with one folder or manageable group at a time and keep specimens in their original order.
2. Support sheets with both hands, keep them flat, and do not bend, turn over, trace, or place objects on them.
3. Handle loose fragments only with staff direction. Report damage immediately and retain all fragments with the specimen.
4. Use annotation slips supplied or approved by HTTU. Do not write on labels or specimen sheets.
5. Return all material to staff for review before leaving.

## **Research activities and images**

Non-destructive observation, transcription, photography, and measurement are normally allowed when they do not endanger specimens or disrupt operations. Imaging equipment, supports, lighting, chemical tests, microscopy requiring removal of material, and destructive sampling require advance approval. Publication-quality image requests may be handled separately when staff time or specialized imaging is required.

## **Sensitive information and conduct**

Precise locality data for rare, threatened, culturally sensitive, or vulnerable taxa may be withheld or generalized. Visitors must follow approved data-use conditions. Harassment, unsafe conduct, unauthorized access, or failure to follow staff instructions may result in termination of a visit and restriction of future access.

## **Acknowledgment and citation**

Publications, reports, exhibits, and datasets based on the collection should acknowledge the Hollister Herbarium at Tennessee Technological University and cite specimens by the herbarium code HTTU and catalog number. Visitors should provide HTTU with a copy or stable link to resulting work when practical.