

Guidelines for use of folders, capsules and boxes to protect specimens

Damage to fragile herbarium specimens through handling or poor storage can result in irretrievable loss of taxonomic information, particularly if there are few flowers and fruits on the specimen.

Enclosing a fragile specimen in an archival paper or card four-flap folder is a simple preventive conservation measure which can effectively reduce the risk of damage.

White paper four-flap folders with backing boards

Use the white folders to protect:

- Fragile plant material eg very dry and brittle/loose, fluffy seedheads/conifers with loose needles etc
- Flimsy or brittle mounting paper eg Lace specimens
- Specimens of particular historic interest eg Giseke/Darwin

Make sure the full size flap is folded first to cover the specimen: the edges of the shorter flaps could rub against fragile plant material causing damage.

Complete the stamped form on the outer flap in pencil:

FRAGILE SPECIMEN: HANDLE WITH CARE
Filed as
Coll.
No.
Region
Barcode no.

Capsules

If a small piece of plant material (eg a fruit or flower) has come loose from a specimen, please put it in a small paper capsule and fasten it to the sheet with a brass archival paperclip.

Grey archival four-flap boxes

Very bulky specimens can cause distortion of the specimens above them.



Using a grey box can help to reduce this type of damage.

Due to the limited amount of space in the herbarium cabinets, these should only be used when absolutely necessary. Wherever possible, place the box at the bottom of the Genus cover, and preferably at the bottom of a shelf.

Make sure the full size flap is folded first to cover the specimen: the edges of the shorter flaps could rub against fragile plant material causing damage.

Complete the stamped form on the outer flap in pencil.

Stocks of folders, capsules and boxes are kept on the trolleys by the cameras and are available from the Mounting Room on the top floor of the Herbarium, first on the left after the second set of double doors.

Please Help Us to Preserve Our Collection

