

THE CATALOGUE OF LIFE: BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION AT THE CLICK OF A MOUSE

Species
2000

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What is the Catalogue of Life?

The Catalogue of Life is the most comprehensive and authoritative available global index of species. It consists of a single integrated species checklist and taxonomic hierarchy published monthly on the web, annually on DVD and as electronic web-services.



The Catalogue is a unique online resource which holds information on the names, relationships, and distributions of species, now reaching 1.5 million species, about 83% of all known plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms.

The creation of the Catalogue of Life is co-ordinated by the Species2000 Secretariat at Naturalis, NL, working closely with the Integrated Taxonomic Information System in the US, the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew (Plants), the World Register of Marine Species (Marine), FADA (freshwater); the SpeciesFile Cluster, Species Dipterorum, NHM London, MNHM Paris, CSIC Madrid (Insects), the Fungi cluster, as well as many individual global species databases including FishBase

Source of information

The content of the Catalogue is supplied by an array of about 143 expert taxonomic databases worldwide with contributions from over 3,000 taxonomic specialists.



Using the Catalogue

The Catalogue of Life is widely used by organizations and individuals world-wide to:

- Check modern species concepts, their accepted names, synonymy, spellings and distribution and environment group for many species;
- Find the place of taxa in a consistent and integrated management classification;
- Compile checklists of species in a particular area or taxonomic group using download services;
- Download an electronic list of taxa for use as electronic taxonomic backbone in other systems and portals for indexing and compiling other biodiversity information

Looking ahead

Regional Checklists for N. America, China, Australia and New Zealand are in preparation for linkage as part of the Catalogue of Life Regional Hub Network.

Compiling species from regional checklists, nomenclators and other sources may require much more complex informatics, taxonomic and system management but it may be the only way to cover the remaining fraction of the world's named species.

More collaboration from megadiverse countries to complete the Catalogue of Life!

Did you know?

- Membership to Species 2000 is open to any organisation, project or individual interested in advancing the aims of the organisation, which are to create a synonymic species checklist for all known species on earth as the baseline dataset for studies of global biodiversity
- The Catalogue of Life is produced as a Dynamic Checklist (monthly editions since February 2012) and as an Annual Checklist. The first Annual Checklist was produced in 2001 on CD and had 204,216 species
- The 2014 Annual Checklist now contains contributions from 143 databases with information on 1,578,063 species and 146,277 infraspecific taxa, and also includes 1,277,567 synonyms and 390,260 common names
- The recent Annual Checklist includes the largest fern genera *Asplenium* from World Ferns Checklist which has >800 species listed in the Catalogue of Life
- 3,000 copies of the Annual Checklist are distributed each year in 80 countries free of charge on DVDs, enabling operation on PCs or laptops without internet access
- GBIF, EoL, IUCN Red List, ENA, ECBOL, and Dictionary of Natural Products are among globally significant biodiversity portals which are using Catalogue of Life for indexing and referencing their information against global species list
- Through all years since 2000, data assembly for the Catalogue of Life was successfully completed at [WorldFish Centre] later FIN, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines

