



Southern African Butterfly Conservation Assessment

Methods for data capture of private butterfly collections

Dear LepSoc member

If you wish to contribute the records from your butterfly collection to the SABCA project, we propose five methods (presented below) to help you with the data capture of your records. The methods below have been put together after discussions with some Lepidopteran collection curators as well as during our first Steering Committee meeting.

Some methods give you the option to be the only handler of your collection, thus preventing any damage to your specimens. However, if you wish to make use of a trained data capture team to capture the label information in your collection, this option is also available. The method that you decide to use is entirely up to you.

Method 1:

- 1) The official curator or owner of the collection removes one label at a time, and manually writes the information that is on the label into a table with matching columns, or enters the label information into the computer software Lepidops Lite.
- 2) The completed tables are sent to our data capturers based at the University of Cape Town (UCT) for entering into the SABCA database, or the Lepidops Lite database is forwarded to UCT.

Method 2:

- 1) The owner of the collection uses a digital camera, with an adequate zoom or macro function, to photograph each label.
- 2) The digital photographs (saved as jpegs) are forwarded to UCT where data capturers will capture the label information onto computer.

Method 3:

- 1) The official curator or owner of the collection systematically removes labels from a set of specimens at a time (e.g. 10 specimens), in such a way that labels and specimens still correspond with each other (to prevent a mix-up in labelling).
- 2) For each set of labels removed, these labels are photocopied onto one A4 sheet (zoomed in), leaving space for any additional notes that need to be added by hand afterwards (e.g. if species name are illegible on the labels).
- 3) After photocopying, each set of labels is then attached to its corresponding specimen (ensuring that labels aren't mixed up), before moving on to the next set of labels.
- 4) The photocopied pages are sent to our data capturers based at the University of Cape Town (UCT) for entering into the SABCA database.

Method 4:

- 1) The owner of the collection dictates the information that is on each label to a second person, thus being the only handler of the specimens. The second person (someone you know or one of our data capturers) will write the information down into a table or capture it onto computer using Lepidops Lite.
- 2) The information is then forwarded to UCT for integration into the SABCA database. If the information is written onto paper, our data capturers based at UCT will capture the data onto computer.

Method 5:

- 1) A roving team of two data capturers, trained to handle specimens in collections, will be given access to your collection. One person will dictate the information on the label and the second person will capture the data onto computer using Lepidops Lite.
- 2) The roving team will return the database to UCT for incorporation into SABCA's database.

Please note:

1) For any species of butterfly, only one specimen from a series of specimens collected at the same locality **and** on the same date needs to be recorded. This will be one record. If more than one specimen forms part of this record please note how many specimens there are.

1) If you wish to use Lepidops Lite (the software developed by Bennie Coetzer), it will be possible to provide training on how to use this excellent software. Lepidops Lite is very easy to use and will save time and effort by capturing data straight onto computer.

2) The roving team will not be responsible for the curation of your collection. In other words, specimens and their labels will be kept in the state that they were found.

3) Each butterfly record that we capture will need to be geo-referenced (i.e. be assigned with latitude and longitude coordinates) so that we can position it as accurately as possible onto a map. For those records which require geo-referencing, our data capturers will try to assign coordinates to them. It would be extremely helpful if you could provide a detailed description for those localities which are very coarsely defined. This would help us to pinpoint the locality on a map.

By contributing the data from your butterfly collection to SABCA, you will obtain an electronic copy of your collection's database. You will also be acknowledged in all SABCA outputs.

Our data capturers are ready and waiting, so we urge you to initiate the data capture process as soon as possible. Please inform me if you decide to contribute your butterfly collection to SABCA, as well as the method you prefer to use. I will then ensure that you receive any assistance that you may need to help you with the process.

As per the agreements you received from the ADU and SANBI, your data will be kept strictly confidential until amnesty is approved!

I greatly look forward to your participation. Please contact me if you need further clarification on the data capture process.

Yours sincerely,

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