

Guidelines for Submitting Plant Specimens for Identification

What to collect:

1. **Short grasses, small flowering herbaceous plants, low shrubs:** Collect several (at least three if possible) ENTIRE plants, including roots, plus extra flowers and/or fruits if available. Clean debris and soil from roots before shipping.
2. **Tall grasses and shrubs, herbaceous forbs, trees, long vines:** Collect several samples that adequately show stem features, leaves and leaf arrangement, and flowers and/or fruits. Collect extra flowers and/or fruits if available. If possible, collect or provide information about underground parts, ie. roots, rhizomes, bulbs, tubers, etc.
3. **Record collection data** and include State, County, geographic location of collection site, and date. This information is important to the identification process and is (later, usually at the County Extension Office) recorded on the **Plant Identification Form 149** which accompanies the plant submitted for identification. Please remember to fill out a separate Plant ID. Form 149 for each plant specimen/species submitted for identification.

How to care for and prepare collected specimens:

1. Plant specimens may be put directly into a plant press in the field or later, and submitted as a dried and pressed specimen.
2. Plant specimens may be allowed to dry without pressing, but are generally more difficult to package and require a larger (than otherwise necessary) box to ship them.
3. Plant specimens may be submitted "fresh" (not dried or pressed) and are best collected directly into a closed or ziplock-type plastic bag WITHOUT EXTRA MOISTURE and kept in a refrigerator until being shipped.

How to submit plant specimens for identification:

1. A **Plant identification Form 149** needs to be filled out for each species/specimen submitted for identification. The plant and form are then mailed together (please enclose the plant id. form within a protective covering, eg. a plastic sandwich bag, if that form is put directly into the closed plastic bag housing the plant specimen) in an (oversized) envelope or box. Package the specimen so as to minimize potential damage from mail handling, eg. placing dried specimens between pieces of cardstock or cardboard within the outer package. In general, a box is a preferable mailing container to an envelope.
2. Plant specimens are usually mailed by/from the County Extension Office to:

Catherine Seibert (Plant Taxonomy Specialist)
MONT Herbarium, 408 Lewis Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717

3. Plant identification results are recorded on the original Plant ID. Form 149 (submitted with the plant) and returned to the County Extension Office. The same results may also be emailed directly to the client and/or County Extension Agent if an email address is provided on the plant id. form.