Insect Label Standards

SWRS Lepidoptera Course, Aug. 2010
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Arachnids and Nematodes
• collection data is as important as the specimen itself

• proper format for labels is therefore crucial
What to include on a label

• Absolute minimum:
  – locality
  – date

Should be unambiguous, understandable data: think of who will be looking at the labels 50 years from now.
Locality data

• use official place names
• GPS co-ordinates are very valuable and virtually guarantee unambiguous locality data
• Google earth and web-based gazeteers
• therefore both locality names & lat-long’s are best:

Date data

• format should be day-month-year
• use whole year (2010 not ’10)
• use roman numerals (or letters) for month
  – lower case is preferred to upper case: ii vs. II

eg. 10.viii.2010 or 10.Aug.2010
Other label data

- elevation
- name of collector(s)
- collecting method (eg. UV lt.)
- habitat (brief!), time of day

- unique identifier codes (don’t rely on these as sole data source!!!)
Label data format

• recommended sequence:

COUNTRY: state/prov.: locality
latitude & longitude [UTM generally not used]
date, collector
(method, habitat, codes)
  - borders look nice but are not needed (and take up unnecessary space)
Printing labels

• generally 4 or 5 lines of text
• use simple fonts: Arial or Univers are good
• final label size should not exceed 6 mm x 17 mm
• use good-quality cardstock:
• 36-40 pound minimum, 60 pound best
Printing labels

• Use India ink or Pigma pens
  – long-term durability: don’t use ball-point!

Laser printers

Setting up templates in Excel:
- eg. Arial Narrow 10-pt. font, print at 40% reduction (Print Preview -> Setup -> 40%)
Example: label data

CAN: AB: Jasper Natl. Park,
Jasper Lake sand dunes
53.097N 118.004W  3300‘
17.May.2006  UV lt.
C.Schmidt & J.Dombroskie
References for label data

• “Label Data Standards for Terrestrial Arthropods” (Biol. Survey of Canada)

• see green pamphlet at back or: