Smithsonian Librarian Named Director of Biodiversity Heritage Library

Thomas Garnett, associate director for Digital Library and Information Systems for the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, has been named the first Program Director of the Biodiversity Heritage Library. He has coordinated the Biodiversity Heritage Library initiative since its inception in 2004. He begins his new position March 31. Garnett has more than 27 years of experience in the library field creating, scoping, implementing, and managing major digital library projects. For the past 23 years, he has worked in the Smithsonian Libraries, where he served as Systems Administrator in the Systems Office, before being promoted to Assistant Director and then Associate director for Digital Library and Information Systems.

The Biodiversity Heritage Library is a consortium of 10 natural history, botanical, and research institute libraries that collectively hold a substantial amount of the world’s published knowledge on biological diversity. It was organized to digitize the legacy literature of biodiversity and make it available as part of a biodiversity commons. Scientists and students from around the world will be able to search and read biodiversity texts from the collections of these libraries and link them to relevant taxonomic, geographic or other useful databases. The project will make information more accessible worldwide and reduce the need for expensive, labor-intensive library research.

In addition to the Smithsonian Institution the other members of the Biodiversity Heritage Library are:

- American Museum of Natural History (New York, NY)
- The Field Museum (Chicago, IL)
- Harvard University Botany Libraries (Cambridge, MA)
• Harvard University, Ernst Mayr Library of the Museum of Comparative Zoology (Cambridge, MA)
• Marine Biological Laboratory / Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (Woods Hole, MA)
• Missouri Botanical Garden (St. Louis, MO)
• Natural History Museum (London, UK)
• The New York Botanical Garden (New York, NY)
• Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (Richmond, UK)

This free information will be accessible to users everywhere. For more information about the Biodiversity Heritage Library, visit http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org.

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