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## **Biodiversity Heritage Library Adds The Field Museum as a New Member**

The Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL), headquartered at the Smithsonian Libraries, welcomes The Field Museum as a new member. One of the original founding institutions of BHL in 2007, The Field Museum has participated in the Biodiversity Heritage Library as an affiliate since 2012 and now represents the consortium's 16th member.

Founded in 1893 as the Columbian Museum of Chicago, The Field Museum has been inspiring curiosity about life on earth for more than 120 years. The Field Museum Library, founded in 1894, is committed to supporting the museum's mission as an educational and research institution concerned with diversity and relationships in nature and among cultures. With a collection of over 275,000 volumes of books and journals and other significant special collections of archives, manuscripts, photo archives and original natural history illustrations, the Library serves the scientific, professional and creative needs of the Museum's staff and research associates, volunteers and interns, as well as visiting researchers, specialists and scholars from around the world.

The Field Museum started contributing to the BHL collection in 2007 through a collaboration with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The museum's first contributions included over a century's worth of Field Museum scientific publications and reports as well as select publications related to hymenoptera. Since then, the library has been digitizing missing volumes from publication runs in BHL, priority requests from users, and select collections with support from The Field Museum's Africa Council and the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois Book Digitization Initiative. Through participation in BHL at the full member level, the museum hopes to digitize many unique and significant titles, including rare volumes from the library's ornithology collection.

"Increasing access to Field Museum collections is a high institutional priority and critical to fulfilling our mission," emphasized Christine Giannoni, museum librarian and head of library collections at the Field Museum Library. "The collaborative nature of the BHL partnership allows us to effectively digitize and share our collections while fulfilling our mission."

Since 2012, BHL’s consortium has operated within a tiered structure comprised of members and affiliates. While affiliates can contribute content, provide technical services, and participate in select committees, participation at the full member level allows for greater institutional impact, including the right to vote on strategic directives, help govern the BHL program and use central digitization funds. Those participating at the member level also commit to an annual fee that helps support BHL’s financial stability.

“We are thrilled to welcome The Field Museum – an institution that has been part of the BHL family since the very beginning – as a BHL member,” affirmed Martin R. Kalfatovic, BHL program director. “As we continue to refine our strategic and operational priorities to ensure long-term sustainability, the support of our members is central to the health of our organization and helps us achieve our mission to provide free, open and global access to the world’s biodiversity knowledge.”

### **About the Biodiversity Heritage Library**

BHL is a consortium of major natural history, botanical and research libraries that seek to contribute to the global “biodiversity commons” by digitizing and aggregating the resources housed within each of the participating institutions, providing free and open access to the legacy literature that underpins the work of the natural science community. For more information, visit the [Biodiversity Heritage Library website](#).

### **About the Smithsonian Libraries**

The Smithsonian Libraries maintains a collection of more than 2 million volumes and serves as an educational resource for the Smithsonian Institution, the global research community and the public. The Libraries are located in Washington, Edgewater, Md., New York City and the Republic of Panama. For more information, visit the [Smithsonian Libraries website](#).

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