



Enhance your  
understanding  
of the natural  
world and our  
place in it.



SPNHC

ADVANCING COLLECTIONS CARE



Our ability to understand the natural world depends on the collection, preservation and ongoing study of natural history specimens. These collections are the physical record of Earth's life forms and processes.

The systematic organization of natural science collections gives us the means to understand the Earth's formation and the diversity of life. In turn, the study of such collections allows us to forecast the future of the planet—information that profoundly affects our lives.



## Natural history collections are the foundation for our understanding of the Earth's life forms and processes.

Objects in natural history collections form a physical inventory of our cultural, biological and geological heritage and enhance our understanding of our world and our place in it. The information they hold is inestimable and their physical value increases with every new technology to emerge.

### Natural history collections play a substantial role in:

- Understanding biodiversity
- Supporting nature conservation
- Furthering education
- Serving the community

### Natural history collections are used to:

- Identify and describe new species of plants and animals
- Reconstruct evolution and the tree of life
- Support research in medicine and human health
- Provide the basis for exhibitions and educational programs

Organization, documentation, and preservation of natural history collections enable us to reconstruct Earth's past, understand the present, and forecast the future.

Collection managers are responsible for ensuring that natural history collections are preserved for use both today and in generations to come. They also need to ensure that the collections are accessible for a wide variety of uses. The two functions of preservation and accessibility sometimes can be at odds with each other. The Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) can help its members develop best practices that assist in decision-making. SPNHC is devoted to the preservation, conservation and management of natural history collections.





← Shell

Photo: Justine Cooper

## Our members:

### **Identify, Catalog, and Document**

Correct identification and organization of specimens and their associated information is critical for the use of collections and requires experience and specialist knowledge.

### **Prepare, Preserve, and Conserve**

Ensuring the future availability of collections and their supporting documentation depends on a holistic approach to their care as well as the correct use of conservation and preparation materials and techniques.

### **Research and Develop**

SPNHC members carry out specimen-based research, and also research to develop new techniques for specimen care and preservation.

### **Share**

From physical access to digitization and databasing, our members make collections accessible for use today and into the future.

### **Advocate and Educate**

SPNHC takes a leading role in promoting collections care issues to the academic community, government, and the general public. Its members are dedicated to training and mentoring the next generation of collections professionals.

Katydid grasshoppers  
Photo: Justine Cooper



← “The Mammals of Australia,” John Gould, 1845-1863

Photo: Justine Cooper



## Membership Benefits

SPNHC is an international organization. Membership gives you access to a lively, active, and interdisciplinary global community of professionals dedicated to the care of natural history collections. SPNHC’s membership is drawn from more than 20 countries and includes museum specialists such as curators, collections managers, conservators, preparators, and database administrators.

The Society hosts annual meetings and sponsors symposia and workshops to foster the exchange of ideas and information.

### Some recent topics include:

- Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Salvage
- Use of Digital Technology in Museums
- Hazardous Collections and Mitigation
- Integrated Pest Management

SPNHC produces several publications. Foremost among these is *Collection Forum*, an annual, refereed journal on all aspects of natural history collections management and conservation. SPNHC also publishes a bi-annual Newsletter, and technical leaflets that examine various aspects of natural history collections care, development and management. The Society also has a growing list of stand-alone books.

**Titles include:**

- *Managing the Modern Herbarium*
- *Museum Studies: Perspectives and Innovations*
- *MuseumWise: Workplace Words Redefined*
- *Storage of Natural History Collections: A Preventive Conservation Approach*
- *Storage of Natural History Collections: Ideas and Practical Solutions*

For a complete library list visit: [www.spnhc.org](http://www.spnhc.org)





← Bella Roca meteorite

Photo: Christopher Ebel

Please detach and mail the above  
with your payment to:

SPNHC  
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USA

## Membership Rates

Life-member Plan 1	\$875 <input type="checkbox"/>
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### Compact storage for ethnographic artifacts

Photo: Justine Cooper



Photography: Justine Cooper, NMNH, and Christopher Ebel  
Design: walltowall.com



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PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

Cover: Horn sharks (*Heterodontus francisci*) →

Photo: Justine Cooper

**SPNHC Treasurer**

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