

Well curated collections have most specimens pinned, labeled, and sorted such that specimens of the same species are housed together in the same unit tray (or series of adjacent trays) within a drawer. Unit trays and drawers containing closely related species are grouped together and arranged according to a hierarchical taxonomic classification.

The highest level taxon for arthropod collections (Phylum Arthropoda) includes insects (Class Insecta), crabs and lobsters (Class Crustacea) and several smaller classes. Class Insecta includes several Orders (e.g., Coleoptera—beetles; Lepidoptera—moths and butterflies, etc.), each order includes one or more Families (e.g., Scarabaeidae—dung beetles, Carabidae—ground beetles, etc.), each family includes one or more Genera (e.g., *Danaeus*—Monarch butterflies and relatives), and each Genus includes one or more species (e.g., *Danaeus plexippus*, the Monarch butterfly).

Ideally, there would be a single, universally accepted, fully hierarchical classification of all species with consistent use and interpretation of the names at each level in the hierarchy.

Unfortunately, ongoing disagreements among taxonomists often result in published classifications that differ from each other to various degrees. Collection curators usually try to follow the most generally accepted published classification in organizing their collections.

Efforts are now underway to create authoritative, online, databases of taxonomic nomenclature that reflect current classifications and can be updated regularly, but so far, such online nomenclatural databases exist for only a few insect groups (e.g., Orthoptera Species File, <http://orthoptera.speciesfile.org/HomePage.aspx> ).