

THE LINNAEUS LINK PROJECT

The creation of an international online digital resource devoted to the works of Carl Linnaeus and his students pre-1831



INTRODUCTION

The Swedish-born naturalist Carl Linnaeus (Carl von Linné, 1707-1778) was one of the great scientists of the eighteenth century. A remarkable individual with an immense enthusiasm for nature, his work in nomenclature and classification covered all species of plants and animals then known to the Western world. His prodigious industry and encyclopaedic publications – particularly *Species plantarum* (1753) and *Systema naturae* (1758) – established and standardised the binomial system for species nomenclature which is still in use today. The works of Linnaeus and his 331 students still provide, not only a significant historical record of eighteenth-century science and culture, but also an important practical tool to support taxonomists in the identification of animals, plants, rocks, fossils and minerals.

CONTEXT

Holdings of Linnaean publications exist in many institutions around the world. In addition to collections in national institutions, there are diverse and extensive special collections held by small, specialist research bodies. Many of these are documented only in local, manual catalogues. Although the collections already attract considerable interest, their full exploitation will be made possible only by facilitating access through a free, integrated Web resource.

THE PROJECT

The Linnaeus Link Project will create a comprehensive online union catalogue of Linnaean titles, with holdings information from institutions worldwide. There will also be detailed descriptions of every significant collection of published works, manuscripts and specimens. The Linnaeus Link resource will be an important tool for scientific and cultural historians and for researchers documenting global biodiversity. The Project is supported by a consortium of museums, archives, libraries and other institutions in Europe and the United States.

Major partners are:

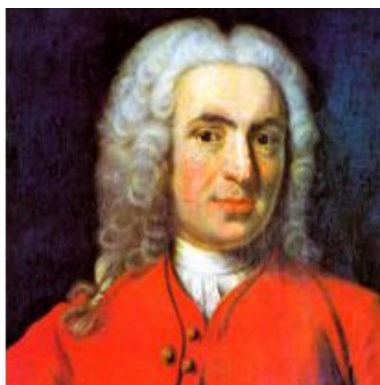
- British Library
- Danmarks Natur- og Laegevidenskabelige Bibliotek (Copenhagen)
- Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation (Pittsburgh, PA)
- Kungl. Vetenskapsakademien (Stockholm)
- Natural History Museum (London)
- Linnean Society of London
- Stockholms universitetsbibliotek
- Svenska Linnésällskapet
- Uppsala universitetsbibliotek

FUNDING



The Project is indebted to the Linnean Society of London, which is funding the Linnaeus Link Project, based at the Natural History Museum, for three years commencing in January 2004. This will enable the cataloguing of the extensive Linnaean Collection at the Natural History Museum, which will form the initial core of the union catalogue, providing high-quality electronic records for the publications of Linnaeus and his circle, and the technical implementation of the union catalogue.

In addition, an ongoing survey of holdings of Linnaean material worldwide is being conducted. Summary survey results and a downloadable survey form can be found on the Project web site at <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/library/linn/>. The Project participants meet at regular intervals to advance the Project.



FURTHER INFORMATION

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