Placing a Reading Room request (Visitor)

Introduction

This guide will explain how to place a request for items from the Library and Archives collections. If you want to come into the Museum to consult the items in person, you will need to place a Reading Room request in advance of your visit. It may take up to eight working days (potentially longer for special collections) for items to be made available for you in South Kensington as some material is kept off-site (off-site store, Tring, remote store). We will not be able to retrieve any additional items during your visit.

Before reading this guide, we strongly recommend you take a look at Searching and Navigation (Visitor), which will help you locate items of interest using the Library and Archives Search. A digital copy of our user guides and further information about the Natural History Museum Library and Archives can be found at www.nhm.ac.uk/library.

Please be aware that any sign in options are for Museum staff only.

Selecting items using the pin icon

Once you’ve successfully searched our collections via our online catalogue and identified the item(s) you are interested in, you can collect them into a list, click the pin icon located to the right side of the title. The icon will change to greyed out with a strike through:

The item will remain selected unless you click the pin again to deselect it, even if you run a new search or navigate to another page.

However, if you close your internet browser window before you have finished, all of your selections will be lost.

Once you have pinned all the items you wish to consult, click the large pin icon at the in the top right corner of the screen to view your marked list.
Emailing your item list to yourself

Under **Marked items** you’ll be presented by a list of everything you have starred, click on the circular pin icon at the top right of the page. By ticking the boxes to select all or individual titles, the menu of **Push to** options will be activated, as shown below:

![Image of marked items and push to options]

**Electronic Resources**

The Library and Archives search covers both print and electronic items; due to our license agreements we cannot guarantee the accessibility of all of our electronic resources to non-staff members. If you place a request for an online resource that is not licensed for use by members of the public, someone from the Library team will be in contact before your visit to let you know.

**Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL)** – any items in your search results which are available via BHL are free to access, no need to visit us or sign in.

**Placing your request**

Our public reading room hours are Tuesday - Thursday 10.00-16.00 (South Kensington) and Monday - Thursday 9.30-15.30 (Tring).

To request an appointment please email us your list of items, along with your name and suggested date for your visit to the Reading Room. It may take up to eight working days (potentially longer for special collections) for items to be made available for you in South Kensington as some material is kept off-site (off-site store, Tring, remote store). Please contact us well in advance of your planned visit in order to discuss your requirements. We will not be able to retrieve any additional items during your visit.

Send your email to library@nhm.ac.uk

**Adding more detail to your request prior to emailing us**

We will need you to provide us with extra information in the email you send us. If you have any items on your list that require additional information for us to be able to fulfill your request, please include this in your email. For example, some of our journal runs are comprised of hundreds of volumes; we will need to know which volume/issue/article you require.

A member of Library and Archives staff will reply to your email as soon as possible to confirm your appointment and send you further instructions about planning your visit. They
may ask additional questions about the item(s) you have requested, so don’t delete your original email containing your item list: it’s a handy reference!

**Amending Reading Room requests**

If after submitting your request, you change your mind and would like to cancel your request, just email us at library@nhm.ac.uk.

If you would like to add additional items to your request, simply repeat the process and let us know in your message that you have an existing request being processed. If there is enough advance notice we will endeavor to fulfill your request.

**Additional support and resources**

Website: [www.nhm.ac.uk/library](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/library)

Email: library@nhm.ac.uk

Library main enquiry desk: Monday – Friday 10.00 – 16.00
Tel: +44 (0)20 7942 5460 (South Kensington)

Tring main enquiry desk: Monday–Thursday 09.30 – 15.30
Tel: +44 (0)20 7942 6156 (Tring)