



Fall Newsletter 2014

The Biodiversity Heritage Library

Inspiring discovery through free access to biodiversity knowledge

The [Biodiversity Heritage Library](#) (BHL) works collaboratively to make biodiversity literature openly available to the world as part of a global biodiversity community.

Strengthening Our Library: Program Updates

BHL Joins GBIF



The Biodiversity Heritage Library has joined the [Global Biodiversity Information Facility](#) (GBIF) as an Associate Participant. GBIF operates through a network of global nodes to develop and maintain an open data infrastructure for sharing digital biodiversity data. As an Associate Participant, BHL will encourage open access and use of biodiversity data among its stakeholders and actively participate in the implementation of the GBIF Work Programme.

[Learn more.](#)

BHL Welcomes USDA National Agricultural Library

The USDA [National Agricultural Library](#) (NAL) has joined the Biodiversity Heritage Library as a BHL Affiliate. BHL has already ingested over [845,000 pages of NAL-digitized content](#) made openly available within the Internet Archive.

NAL is actively digitizing historic USDA and other high demand, public

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BHL at a Glance

[Volumes Online:](#)

152,000+

[Pages Online:](#)

44MM+

[Flickr Images:](#)

92,000+

[Twitter Followers:](#)

4,900+

[Facebook Likes:](#)

8,800+

Keep in Touch

[Website](#)



[Facebook](#)



[Twitter](#)



[Blog](#)



[Flickr](#)

domain items from its collection. Many of these items, both serial and monograph, fit within the scope of BHL, and, when the subject area is appropriate, the digital copies will be added to our collection. For example, NAL is currently digitizing non-USDA [seed catalogs](#) in cooperation with other BHL members for inclusion in BHL.

[Learn more.](#)

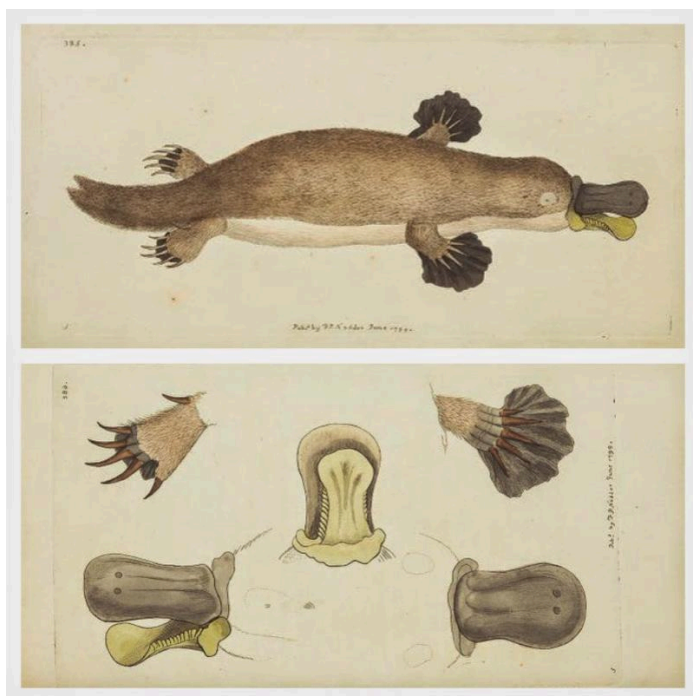
What's in a Name? Harvard, EOL & BHL to Create Innovative Learning Experience

The Harvard Museums of Science & Culture, in partnership with the [Encyclopedia of Life](#) and BHL, received an IMLS grant to create an innovative learning experience entitled *What's in a Name? Species, Naming and the Scientific Process* to educate and engage the public in systematics, species identification and naming. The project addresses the threefold challenge of enhancing public understanding of biodiversity, improving scientific literacy, and creating public awareness of digitized museum and library collections.

[Learn more.](#)

Building Collections: Content Updates

News from Down Under

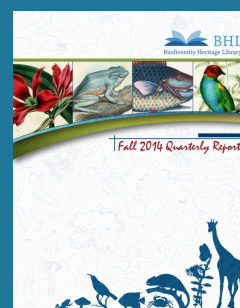


The first published illustration of the Duck-billed Platypus, from *The Naturalist's Miscellany, or Coloured figures of natural objects*, Vol. 10, George Shaw, 1799. Digitized by Museum Victoria.



Support BHL

We believe providing researchers with knowledge about biodiversity is critical to saving life on earth. Help us accomplish this goal by [donating to BHL](#) today.



BHL Report

Check out the [BHL Quarterly Report](#) to learn all about the BHL program and the progress we've made!

BHL Australia, led by Museum Victoria, [ramped up their project](#) again this quarter thanks to renewed funding from the Atlas of Living Australia and a new enthusiastic team. To date, Museum Victoria has contributed [nearly 100,000 pages to BHL](#).

Future plans for the project include the digitization of non-published works in Museum Victoria's historical collection: Gold Registers, Exhibition Catalogues, Field Diaries and the unbound sections of the [Prodromus of the Zoology of Victoria](#). They also intend to continue digitization of rare books, starting with those featured in the [Art of Science](#) exhibition. BHL Australia also plans to enable the establishment and provide ongoing support to new BHL partners within museums and herbaria around Australia and in New Zealand, while also strengthening their existing relationships within the global BHL community. [Learn more](#).

Connecting with Users: Outreach Updates

Monsters Are Real!



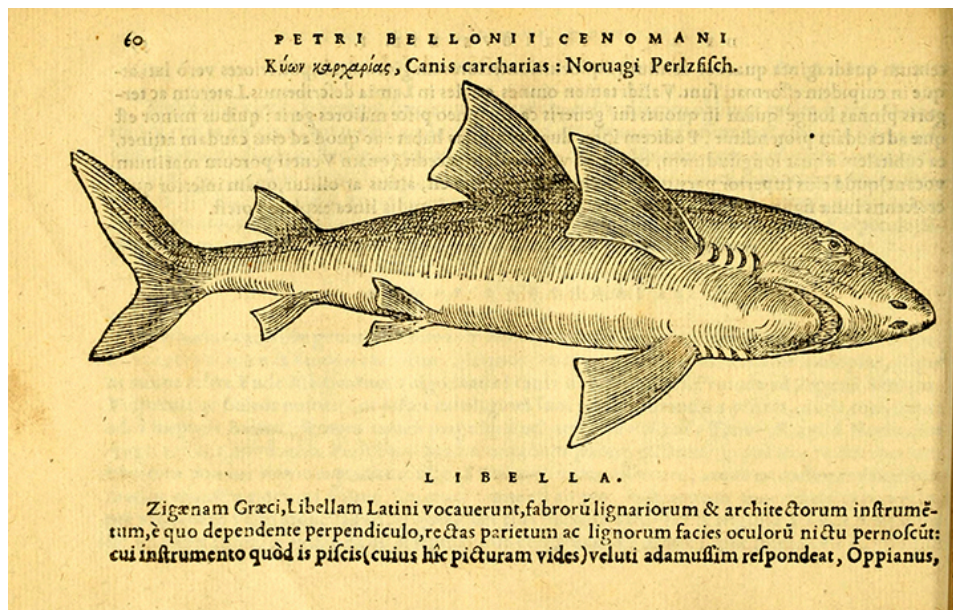
The Hydra! Seba, Albertus. Locupletissimi rerum naturalium thesauri accurata descriptio, et iconibus artificiosissimis expressio, per universam physices historiam. v. 1. 1734.

So you think monsters are nothing more than a myth? Many of history's most fearsome legendary monsters are actually based on real animals.

In celebration of Halloween, BHL produced a multi-platform social media campaign entitled "Monsters Are Real." The campaign explored the stories, people, books and animals that inspired such monsters as the Kraken, Hydra, Leviathan, and Sea Monster. Highlights from the campaign include [six blog posts](#), each on a different monster, and collections of historic [books](#) and [images](#) depicting monsters from the last five centuries.

And let's not forget the monster [pumpkin carving patterns](#) and associated [video](#)! [Learn more](#).

Shark Week!



Earliest known published image of a Great White Shark. Pierre Belon. 1553.
De aquatilibus duo.

BHL joined the rest of the world in celebrating [Shark Week](#), August 10-16. In addition to sharing BHL shark content on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), we also [published a blog post](#) on the history of shark discovery and classification, which was [republished by Smithsonian Magazine](#). Tapping into the existing Shark Week audience allowed BHL to significantly expand our reach and engagement, resulting in a 267% increase in engagements with our Shark Week tweets and a 218% increase in views on our Shark Week blog post compared with average engagements and views this past quarter. The moral of the story? People Love Sharks.

Enhancing Our Library: Technical Updates

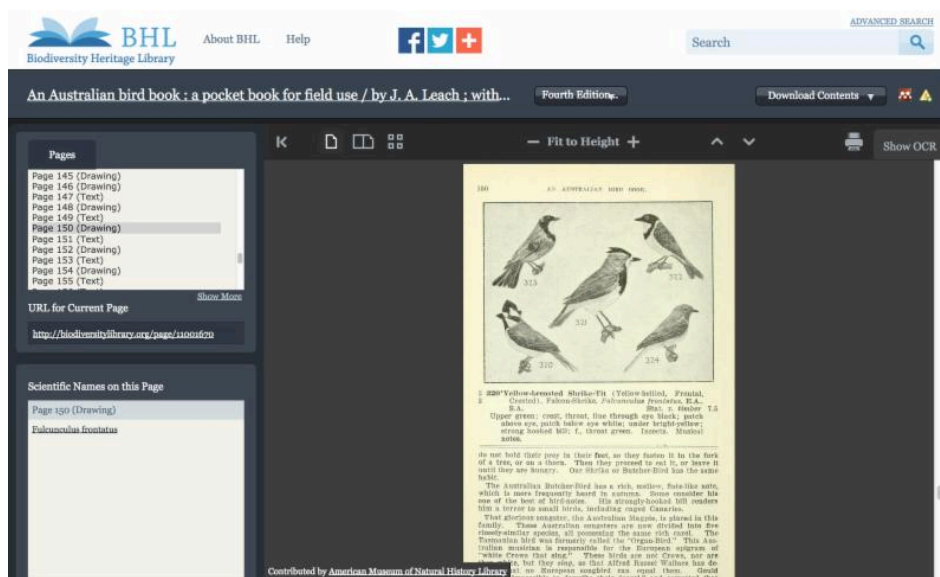
Progress Update: Purposeful Gaming

The IMLS-funded [Purposeful Gaming and BHL](#) project aims to improve access to BHL content by creating games that allow users to correct digital outputs of BHL's texts. These outputs are created automatically (via OCR) and manually (via user transcriptions of handwritten texts). The project's game designer, [Tiltfactor](#), has recently completed and beta-tested two initial prototypes for both gaming and non-gaming audiences. The final games are expected to go live in May 2015.

Also as part of the project, the team continues to promote the transcription of the Brewster journals, available through [FromThePage](#) (13% journals

and 6% of diaries complete) and the [Biodiversity Volunteer Portal](#) (41% of journals and 84% of diaries complete). [Learn more.](#)

Progress Update: Art of Life



Example of how metadata now displays descriptive information about the types of images found within BHL pages, thanks to volunteer efforts.

As part of the NEH-funded [Art of Life project](#) to improve access to BHL images, pages identified as having illustrations (thanks to algorithms developed by the Indianapolis Museum of Art Lab) are currently being manually classified by volunteers as belonging to one or more image types: drawing, table, photograph, map, and/or bookplate. Next steps for the project are to crowdsource descriptions for the image's content (e.g. subjects, dates, illustrator) through platforms such as Flickr and Wikimedia Commons.

BHL will also be crowdsourcing BHL image descriptions through another platform, [Zooniverse](#), the premier host for citizen science projects. This opportunity came about through a partnership with [Constructing Scientific Communities](#) (aka ConSciCom). Expect to see BHL content available in Zooniverse in late spring or early summer of 2015.

Progress Update: Mining Biodiversity

The [Mining Biodiversity project](#), funded by an IMLS Digging Into Data grant, aims to enhance BHL with semantic metadata, improved search, and greater integration with social media. This quarter, project staff deployed a survey to identify the best way to present and allow users to interact with semantic search results in BHL. Staff are also currently conducting in-depth focus-group interviews to better assess user search needs.

The Social Media subgroup implemented a social sharing application

called [AddThis](#) on the BHL website, which allows users to easily share content and follow BHL on social media. The subgroup has conducted an [extensive analysis of the BHL Twitter network](#) in order to better understand the BHL audience and refine outreach strategies.

BHL Presents!

Explore the links below to learn more about the presentations staff have given about BHL and conferences they have attended this quarter:

[Costantino, Grace: *Social Media and Society*. Attendance.](#)

[Frank, Jiri and Carolyn Sheffield. *Biodiversity Library Exhibition Training*. Workshop.](#)

[Gwinn, Nancy E.: *EOL Executive Committee Meeting*. Presentation.](#)

[Hulser, Richard P. *Internet Librarian International*. Presentation.](#)

[Hulser, Richard P. *Library 2.014 Worldwide Virtual Conference*. Presentation.](#)

[Kalfatovic, Martin: *North American Regional Node Meeting of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility \(GBIF\)*. Presentation.](#)

[Kalfatovic, Martin and Judy Warnement: *7th Annual Global Plants*. Attendance.](#)