

NEWS & NOTES

A quarterly newsletter from the Biodiversity Heritage Library

SPRING 2015

Inspiring Discovery through Free Access to Biodiversity Knowledge

The [Biodiversity Heritage Library](#) (BHL) improves research methodology by collaboratively making biodiversity literature openly available to the world as part of a global biodiversity community.

Species Named After BHL!

A new land snail species from Laos has been named after the Biodiversity Heritage Library! *Vargapupa biheli* was named in honor of BHL to express thanks for "the multitude of rare literature made available to us. The name 'biheli' is an acronym derived from the name Biodiversity Heritage Library." [Learn more](#).

2015 BHL Members Meeting

BHL Members and Affiliates met at The Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, IL, for the 2015 Annual Meeting (17-18 March 2015). The meeting began with an open BHL-Day on 17 March, during which librarians, scientists, and interested parties in the Chicago area were invited to attend a half-day program about BHL. During the business portion of the meeting on 18 March, the 2015 budget was approved, a committee to revise membership policies was organized, and updates to our strategic plan through 2017 were discussed. [Learn more](#).



Attendees at the 2015 BHL Members Meeting

New Member: The Field Museum

In March, BHL welcomed The Field Museum of Natural History as a new member. One of the original founding institutions in 2007, The Field Museum has participated in the BHL as an Affiliate since 2012 and now represents the consortium's 16th Member. The Field Museum started contributing to the BHL collection in 2007 through a collaboration with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Through participation in BHL at the full Member level, the Museum hopes to digitize many unique and significant titles, including rare volumes from the Library's ornithology collection. [Learn more](#).

New Affiliate: BHL Africa

This quarter, BHL Africa, which officially launched in 2013, joined the Biodiversity Heritage Library as an Affiliate. Furthermore, on 30 January 2015, the JRS Biodiversity Foundation announced an award of \$150,000 to facilitate the growth of BHLA. Awarded to the South African National Biodiversity Institute, this new grant will allow BHL Africa to expand active BHLA participation, stabilize governance and infrastructure, assess the capacity of participating institutions, and host workshops and trainings for 13 BHLA member institutions. [Learn more](#).

Garden Stories

This March, BHL celebrated [Garden Stories](#), a week-long social media event that explored the art, history, and science of gardening and used the [over 14,000 seed and nursery catalogs in BHL](#) to help tell these stories. A series of [10 blog posts](#), a collection of [over 2,500 images in Flickr](#), a selection of our [favorite images in Pinterest](#), and a plethora of [tweets](#), Facebook, and [Tumblr](#) posts constituted the event. As part of our Purposeful Gaming project, we also made [select catalogs available for transcription](#). Finally, we hosted a [TwitterChat on 20 March](#), in which we invited users to submit their gardening questions for experts at participating BHL Member & Affiliate institutions to answer. See the campaign in our [Storify](#). See how impactful the campaign was in our [evaluation](#).



Celebrating gardening with
Garden Stories

New Collection from Harvard University, Botany Libraries

In February, Harvard University Herbarium, Botany Libraries highlighted the launch of a new collection in BHL: [The Archives from the Boston Metropolitan Park](#), which is composed of approximately 8,000 pages of manuscript material documenting the progress of an 1890s Metropolitan Park Commission survey of the vegetation in the undeveloped woodlands surrounding Boston. The collection includes the field notes, diaries, datebooks, and correspondence of local botanist Walter Deane, who was hired to compile, edit, and publish the survey's findings. These archival materials, as well as original specimens collected from the woodlands, were digitized as part of the Connecting Content project funded by an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Leadership Grant. [Learn more.](#)



Map of the original Metropolitan Park Reservations

Missouri Botanical Garden Publishes First eBook via BHL

In January, the Peter H. Raven Library at the Missouri Botanical Garden celebrated the launch of the library's first e-book publication entitled [Wildflowers and Landscapes of Ecuador: The Way We Knew It](#). Published through BHL, the eBook is comprised of more than 200 watercolors and a corresponding unpublished manuscript by Mary Barnas Pomeroy on the plants and fungi of Ecuador. The work, begun in 1938 and published now after more than a 50 year hiatus, details 41 different botanical families and also includes a short fictional story by Ms. Pomeroy titled "An Indian boy meets Mount Pichincha's flowers." [Learn more.](#)



MBG's first eBook via BHL

Citizen Science and Zooniverse

On 4 March, BHL's latest citizen science project, [Science Gossip](#), released on Zooniverse in a collaboration with 'Constructing Scientific Communities: Citizen Science in the 19th and 21st Centuries' (ConSciCom). The project allows users to help identify and describe illustrations from 19th century periodicals in the BHL collection. Since the project's launch, more than 3,600 volunteers have added over 160,000 classifications to natural history illustrations in *Science Gossip*. [Learn more.](#)

Art of Life Flickr Image Tagging

In January, as part of an ongoing effort to improve access to images as part of the [Art of Life](#) project, BHL launched a revitalized call to add tags to BHL images in Flickr. The call coincided with the release of over 1 million images from BHL to the Internet Archive's Book Images Flickr stream. BHL is asking audiences to tag images in either the [IA Flickr Commons stream](#) or the [BHL Flickr collection](#). Since the January call, over 1,700 images in the BHL Flickr collection have been tagged by our user community, translating to over 18,000 total BHL images tagged to date. [Learn more](#).

Support BHL

Providing researchers with free and open access to biodiversity knowledge is critical to saving life on Earth. Help us accomplish this goal by [donating to BHL today](#).

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