

Arctos Community Data Policy

Below we describe the Arctos policy for data publication and use (which we have adapted with gratitude from the [Canadensys Network](#)). This policy is not a legal document, but by agreeing to it, you help to build a vibrant community around Arctos data and support future efforts to maximize the value and impact of all biodiversity and cultural data.

Data Use

Give credit where credit is due

It is common practice in scientific research to cite the data you are using. Our collections have invested a lot of time and effort into collecting, digitizing, maintaining, and publishing the biodiversity and cultural information you are using, and they deserve credit for their work. You can find the preferred formats for citation at the end of this document or in their [collection-specific terms of use](#).

The collection records represented in Arctos are the property of the institution that houses them, with all rights reserved. Each collection is responsible for licensing their own data and media.

Be responsible

Use the data responsibly. The data are published to allow anyone to better study and understand the world and society around us, so please do not use the data in any way that is unlawful, harmful or misleading. Understand the data that you are accessing, specifically that the data are subject to change, errors, and sampling bias, or may be inappropriate for your purposes. Protect the reputation of the data publisher and clearly indicate any changes you may have made to the data. If you find errors or make a substantial effort at data cleanup, please consider providing feedback to the collections or annotate the primary data records with your suggestions so that others can benefit from your efforts.

Share knowledge

Let us know if you have used the data. It helps us show the value of our work, and it helps you reach a wider audience. Do not hesitate to contact us. Inform the appropriate Arctos collection if you have comments about the data, notice errors, or want more information. Their contact details are included in the Arctos portal ([arctos.database.museum](#)), third-party aggregator dataset metadata, and on our website ([arctosdb.org](#)).

Respect the data license

Understand and respect the data license or waiver under which the data are published. It is indicated in the [“license”](#) field of every record and in the dataset metadata. To help you [make better use of the data](#), most of our participants have dedicated their data to the [public domain \(CC0\)](#). Do not remove the public domain mark or provide misleading information about the copyright status.

Data Publication

Arctos follows FAIR data principles (specifically <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles>) and as such we share data with biodiversity aggregators from the Arctos database (i.e., “publish”). In order to publish data through the Arctos network, the following criteria must be met:

- You are a member of the Arctos Consortium.
- You are publishing a specimen or observation or other record dataset, a taxonomic checklist, or metadata about one of these (for biological collections it is one of the 3 types of datasets supported by the [IPT](#)).
- You hold the rights to publish the data.
- You are willing to maintain the dataset and improve its quality where possible.
- You are willing to provide sufficient metadata, so users can learn what the dataset is about.
- You are publishing the data under an open license, so others can really use them. We strongly recommend publishing under [CC0](#) ([here is why](#)).

Preferred citations

These are the preferred formats for citing data from Arctos. If other citation practices apply, feel free to use them. We do request however to always include a link (see below for a single record link to Arctos detail page via the three-part GUID of **Institution Code:Collection Code:catalog number**).

Aggregated data

Example: Invertebrate Zoology, **Alabama Museum of Natural History**, University of Alabama Tuscaloosa, Alabama, USA. <https://arctos.database.museum/collection/ALMNH:Inv> (accessed on [date])

Single Record data

Example: Taxon Name and link to its record [for example, MVZ:Herp:12345]. [https://arctos.database.museum/guid/\[MVZ:Herp:12345\]](https://arctos.database.museum/guid/[MVZ:Herp:12345]) (accessed on [date]).

Relevant References and Links:

[Arctos Guidelines for applying Data Licensing and Terms of Use](#)
[Canadensys Norms for Data Use and Publication](#)
[Creative Commons Licenses](#)
[VertNet Guide to Copyright and Licenses for Dataset Publication](#)
[VertNet Norms for Data Use and Publication](#)