

# Reflections on imaging invertebrate specimens in alcohol

Sandra Brantley

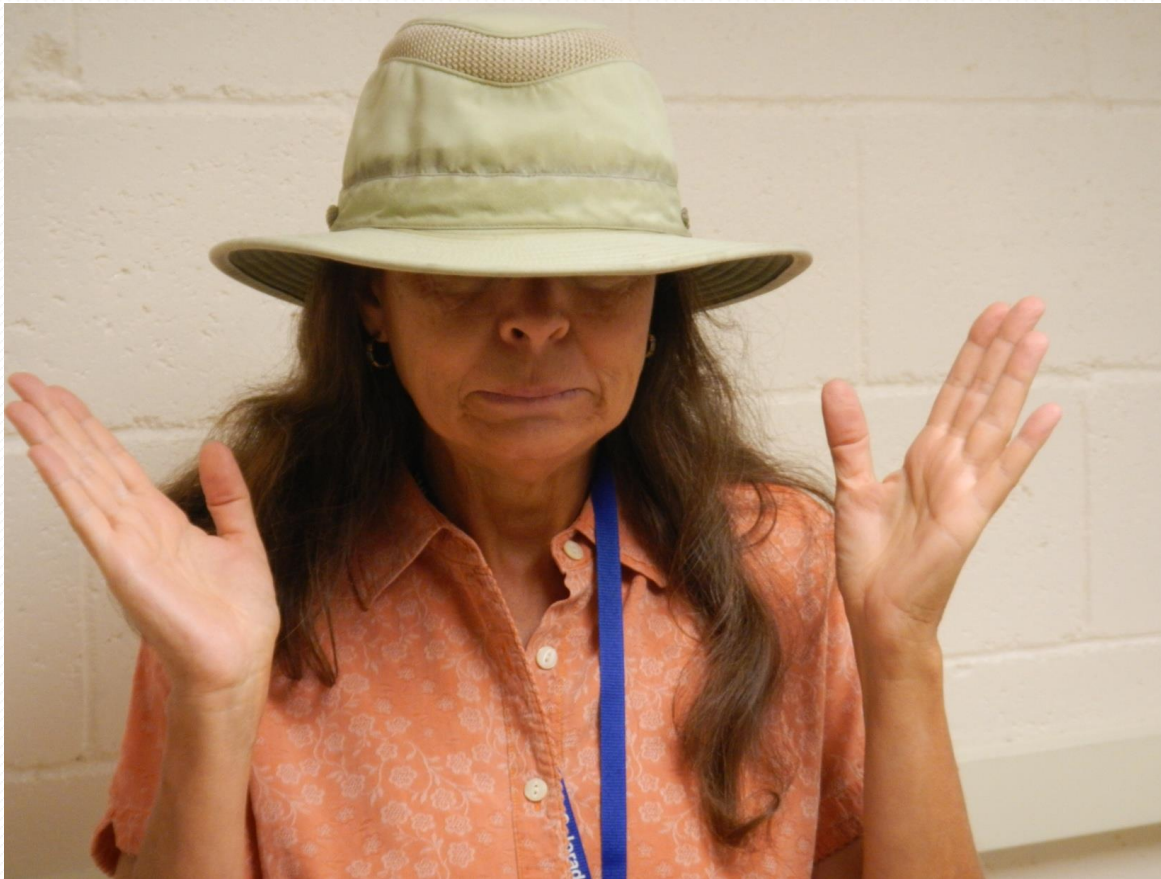
Museum of Southwestern Biology  
UNM, Albuquerque, NM





“Let’s have images to go with the database.”

My reaction:





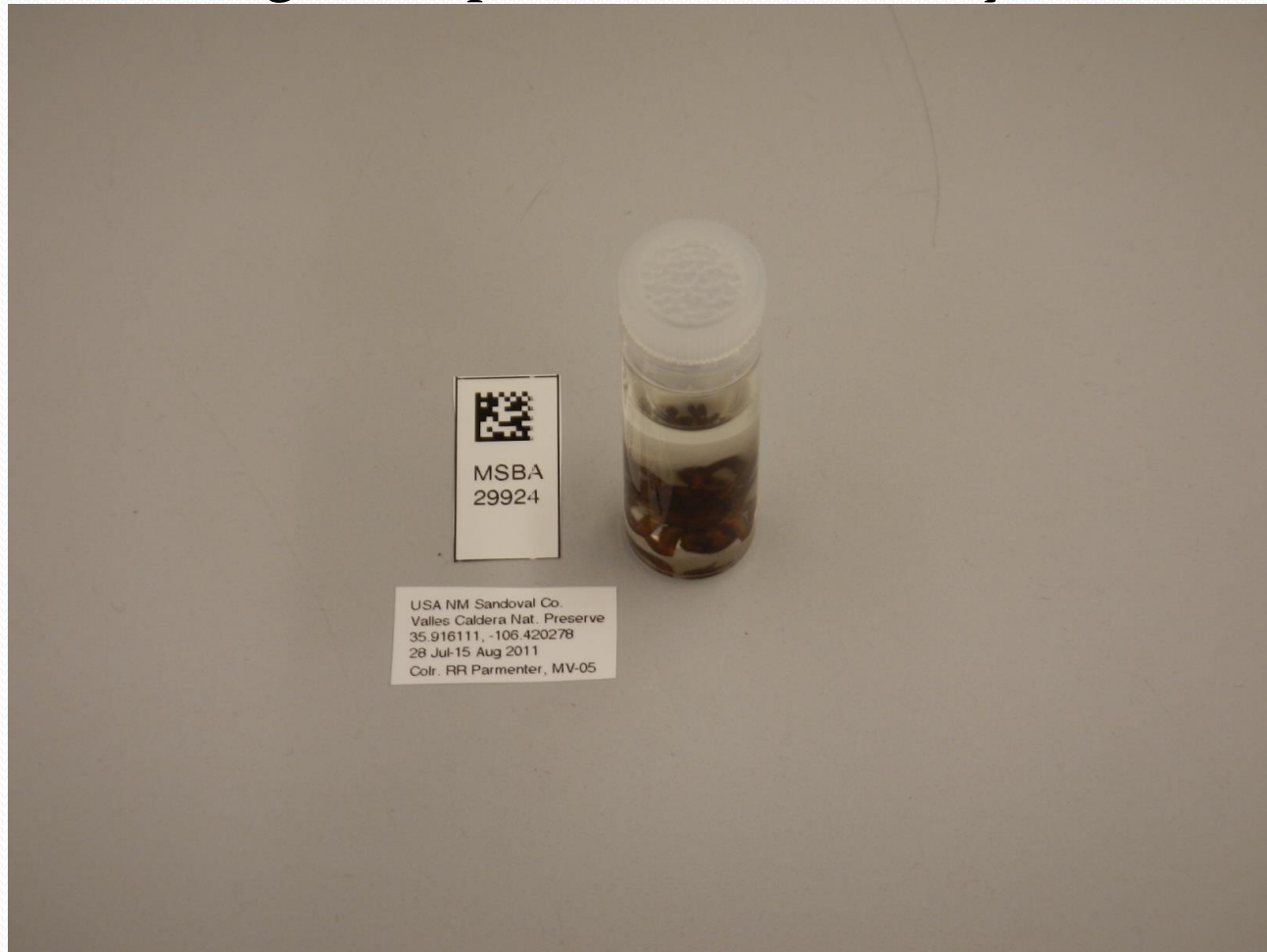
What does it mean to “image your collection?”

Maybe rephrase as  
“Why do you want to image the collection?”



# Documentation of physical holdings

Use the image to capture label info for your database





Habitus images  
One or a set of images per taxon,  
not of each specimen

Linyphiidae, *Erigone* sp. male

No. of images depends on  
the taxon



Stone centipede, Lithobiidae





Thomisidae,  
*Xysticus cunctator*, male



More detailed images for:  
Verification  
Crowdsourcing of IDs  
Reducing loans of specimens





How big is your collection?  
Do you want to image all of it or just a part?

Selected taxa

Southwestern Collections of Arthropods Network (SCAN)  
ground-dwelling arthropods

Selected studies

Habitat type: riparian, agricultural fields

Locality: arachnids from a field expedition

Systematics interest: millipedes in the Atopetholidae

Specimens not fully identified

What kind of funding and space (physical and digital)  
do you have?







Who will do the imaging?  
How will other work be affected?

How much time do you have  
for training, supervising, writing protocols, etc.?

Can you take advantage of images already available  
from your collection?  
Ex., images taken for a revision or other publication.





Be flexible  
(easier on some days than others)

Get started, realizing you will probably make some changes later; questions will come up as you work through the steps.

Have reality checks for yourself and for those not directly involved (“How come you’re not done yet?”)

Good news is that our small inverts are getting attention and more of a presence on the Web.

# Acknowledgments



Southwestern Collections of Arthropods Network (SCAN)

TCN grant, NSF EF 1207371

Dr. Kelly Miller, MSB Arthropods Curator

Grad students Heidi Hopkins and Rachael Mallis

Undergrad student Matt Leister