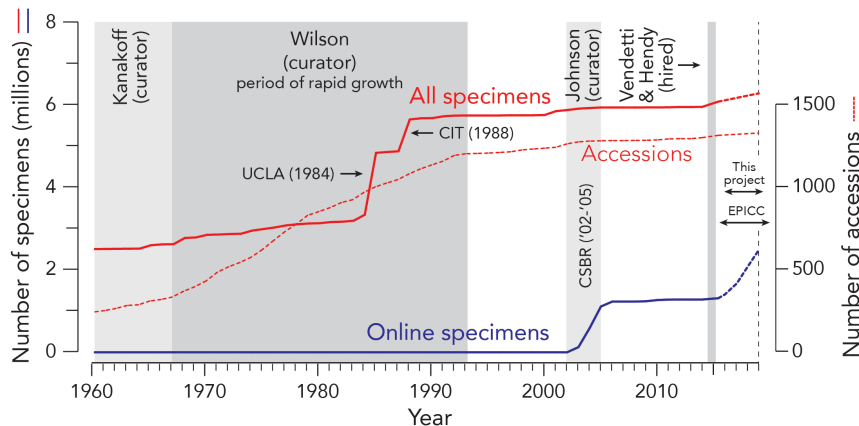


# DIGITIZING FOSSIL MOLLUSCA AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

HENDY, Austin, ESTES-SMARGIASSI, Kathryn, WALKER, Lindsay, & Jann VENDETTI

## Scope

- 7 million specimens (mostly Mollusca)
- >30,000 collecting localities
- Moving to KE-EMu platform, currently MS Access, was PostgreSQL
- Strengths in:
  - Cretaceous-Cenozoic, and particularly Plio-Pleistocene (3 million years-present).
  - Eastern Pacific, particularly California and Mexico.



## Challenges

- Mostly not digitized (1.2 million spms)
- Significant investment required in conservation materials
- Arranged stratigraphically, not taxonomically
  - Not completely identified (65%).
  - Arrangement slows identification process

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## Inventory

- Drawer level (6900 lane cabinet drawers) inventory of curatorial (#'s), contextual (geography/stratigraphy/time), conservation, and compositional data.
- Whole-drawer imaging underway.
- Both data will be searchable online in 2018.



## Funding

- NSF-TCN: Eastern Pacific Invertebrate Cenozoic Communities
  - Catalog 828,000 specimens
  - Image 22,000 specimens
- NSF-CSBR: Cretaceous Seas of California
  - Catalog 126,000 specimens
  - Image 1,300 specimens
- NSF-PEN: Fossil Insect Collaborative
  - Catalog 25,000 specimens
  - Image 3,000 specimens
- CLIR (Council of Library & Information Resources)
- IMLS (Institute of Museum & Library Services)

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## Digitization Workflow

- Prioritization of specimens to digitize
  - We will catalog 1 million specimens out of about 5 million in total
  - High-grade on the basis of workflow efficiency, cost, and research value
- Staff undertake identification/validation
- Students catalog and number specimens
- Exemplar specimens are photographed



## People

- 3 full-time collections/projects managers
- Large pool of students and volunteers
  - Students from many local community colleges and smaller universities.
    - Academic credit for effort
    - Reward of part-time employment for best candidates
- Volunteers drawn from amateur paleontological organizations.
  - Some experience, but often life-long learners.

