

Foundations in Curating: Designing a System for Cataloging, Preparing, and Accessing MacEwan's Invertebrate Fossil Collection

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Poster Presentation Abstract:

MacEwan University hosts a large collections of hitherto un-curated Upper Ordovician to Upper Mississippian invertebrate fossils, donated to the University in perpetuity by a former faculty member, which are currently housed in temporary storage by the University's Earth Sciences division. While field notes and limited provenience data were included with the donation, no standardized system of documentation or permanent storage plan currently exists in the Earth Sciences division to facilitate management, protection, and further study of these fossil specimens. The primary goal of this research project is to create a curatorial system, including accession, locality, catalog, and preparation forms and protocols, a photographic record of specimens, and an alphanumeric catalog coding system unique to MacEwan University, and to apply this system to the invertebrate fossil collection so that it might serve as a prototype for future curatorial efforts. It is hoped that a detailed analysis of MacEwan University's first cataloged fossil collection, in conjunction with the development of a foundational methodology for curating specimens, will have potential applications for collections held by other divisions within the University, which will in turn make MacEwan's collections accessible and useful to students, faculty, members of other institutions, and the public.

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