

# Insect Label Transcription Tutorial

## Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of Natural History, Department of Entomology

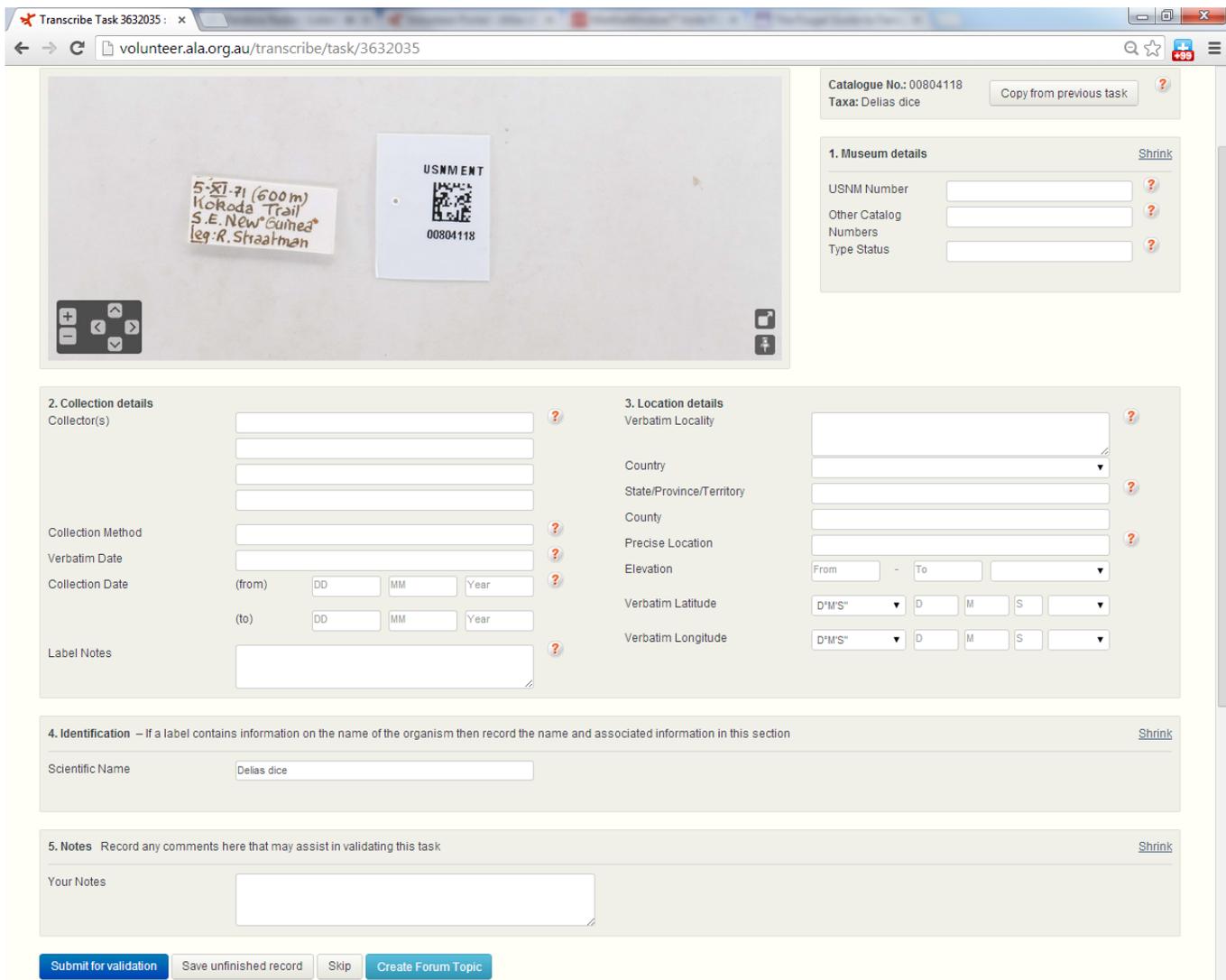
Thank you for taking the time to help us transcribe specimen labels for the National Collection!



These are some examples of what our insect labels may look like. Each photo will have at least two labels. One will contain a barcode with the USNM number (represented with a red asterisk \*) and the other will be a collection/locality label (represented with a blue asterisk \*) containing collection data that may include collection dates, collector names and collection location information. There may also be other labels that have additional information such as the collection name (represented with a green asterisk \*), type status (represented with a purple asterisk \*), etc. It is very important that all information on these labels be recorded somewhere in the template.

Most of the information contained in these labels will have a dedicated place on the expedition template. However, some information will not fit in any of the designated areas and will need to go in the “Label Notes” section of the template. The following tutorial will help you get acquainted with typical insect labels and where to enter common information in our template.

When you start the expedition, an image will appear on the left with the template to the right and below the image. Use the +/- buttons by the image to magnify the label so the data may easily be read. If you have a question regarding a field found on the template, you may select the question mark button  and notes will appear for selected fields.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `volunteer.ala.org.au/transcribe/task/3632035`. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Image View:** A photograph of two insect labels. The left label is handwritten and reads: "5-ST-71 (600m) Koroda Trail S.E. New Guinea leg: R. Straatman". The right label is a printed USNM label with a QR code and the number "00804118". Below the image are zoom-in (+) and zoom-out (-) buttons.
- Metadata:**
  - Catalogue No.: 00804118
  - Taxa: *Delias dice*
  - Buttons: "Copy from previous task" and a question mark icon.
- 1. Museum details:**
  - USNM Number:
  - Other Catalog Numbers:
  - Type Status:
  - Each field has a question mark icon.
- 2. Collection details:**
  - Collector(s):
  - Collection Method:
  - Verbatim Date:
  - Collection Date: (from) DD MM Year (to) DD MM Year
  - Label Notes:
- 3. Location details:**
  - Verbatim Locality:
  - Country:
  - State/Province/Territory:
  - County:
  - Precise Location:
  - Elevation: From  To
  - Verbatim Latitude: D°M'S" D M S
  - Verbatim Longitude: D°M'S" D M S
- 4. Identification:**
  - Scientific Name:
- 5. Notes:**
  - Your Notes:

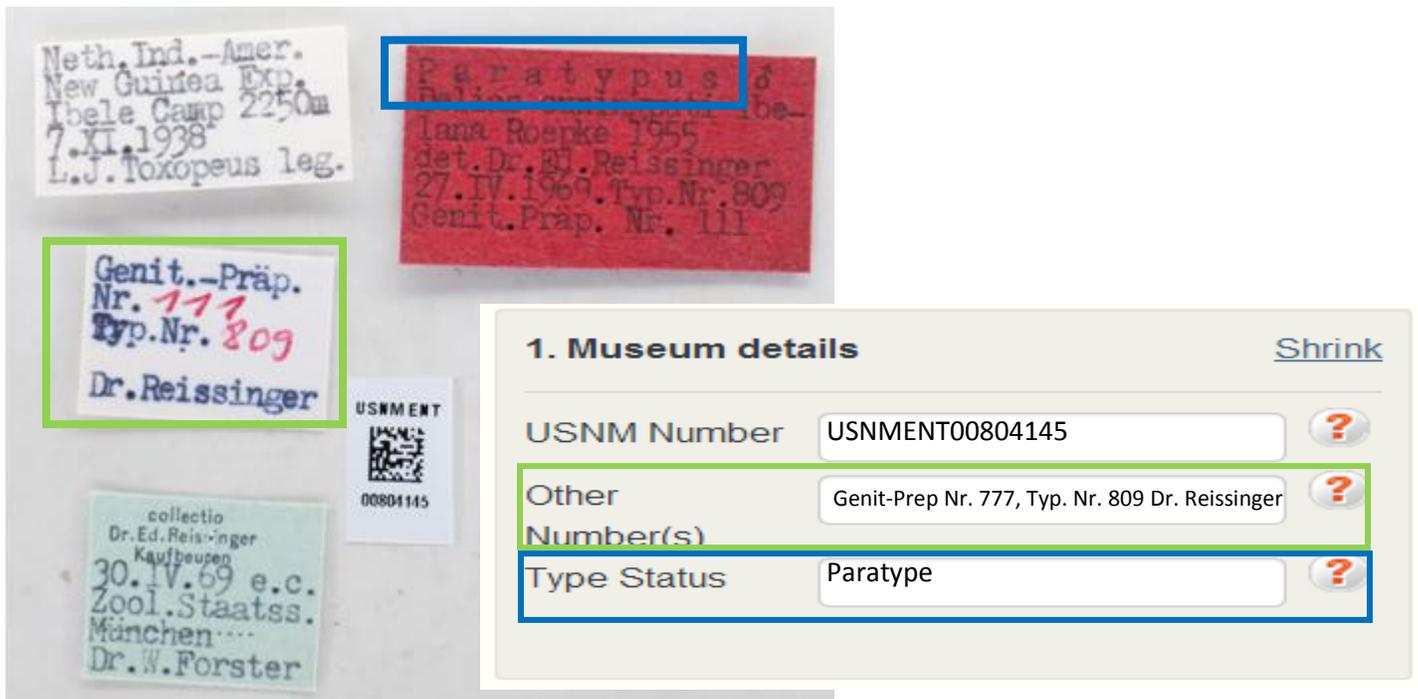
At the bottom, there are four buttons: "Submit for validation" (blue), "Save unfinished record", "Skip", and "Create Forum Topic" (blue).

Start by entering the Museum Details (1). Every task will have an USNM number. The USNM number is found on a white label with a barcode (highlighted in red below), and will be automatically filled in.



The two remaining fields under Museum details are optional fields. These fields will not always be used. The Other Number(s) field is to place any other numbers (other than the date or elevation) that may be on the label. When entering numbers in this field, please include the number identifier. The number identifier may come before or after the number. If you are unsure, it is usually best to err on the side of including more information. Please separate multiple numbers with a comma.

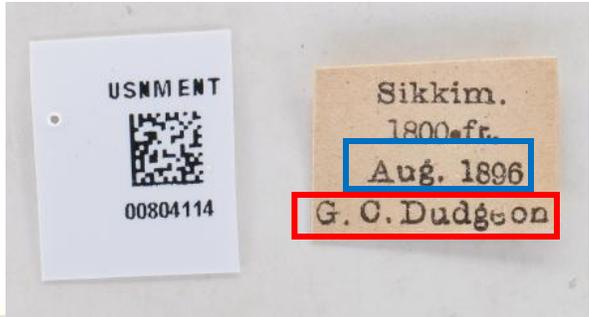
Also on the label may be the type status. This could be labeled within the text of a label or on its own label. The type status will usually contain one of these designations: cotype, paratype, lectotype, or paralectotype. Below is an example of a label that contains other numbers and type status information. Other Numbers are highlighted in green and type status is highlighted in blue. Since there are two “other” numbers, please enter both numbers and their identifiers, separated by a comma.



After the Museum details have been added, please fill in the Collection Details (2). This information will usually be found on the collection label. Collection details include the collector, collection method, date collected and label notes. .

Below are detailed field explanations and color coded examples of how Collection Details should be entered:

- Collector(s)** The collector information will usually be the only name found on this label. Please enter the collector name in the following format: [Last Name], [First Name/Initial] [Middle Name/Initial]. If there is more than one collector, please enter on separate lines.
- Collection Method** This will be found on some labels, but is not a required field. Some examples include: sweep net, black light, malaise, and pit fall trap.
- Verbatim Date** Enter the collection date exactly as it appears on the label. For example, this date field could contain “Fall 1948”, “2-X-1948” or “October 1948”. The format of this field is flexible.
- Collection Date** Enter the dates in the following format: DD MMM YYYY. If only one date is given, enter the same date in both the “to” and the “from” field. Please note, some labels may be written with Roman numerals used in place of the month. For example, 2-X-1948 should be entered: 02 Oct 1948. If the label date given was Fall 1948, only the year should be entered in the year field.
- Label Notes** Some labels may contain information that does not fit into a designated field. This may include the original collection name, a host plant or a description of the insect. Please use this field in the following cases:
- The label is illegible (simply type “Illegible”)
  - You do not know where to place the information
  - The entire label verbatim, if written in a language that you are not familiar
  - You are not sure what the information is about
  - The information given does not have a designated field



2. Collection details

Collector(s) 

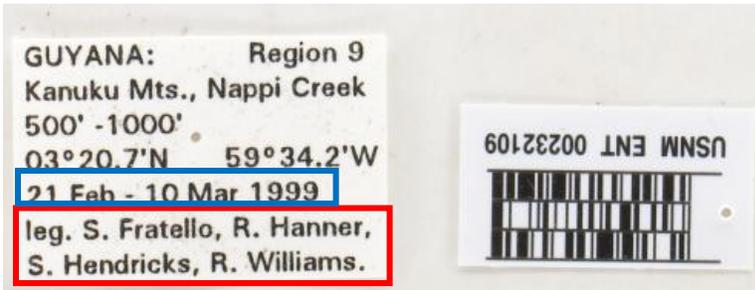
Collection Method 

Verbatim Date 

Collection Date (from)   

(to)   

Label Notes



2. Collection details

Collector(s) 

Collection Method 

Verbatim Date 

Collection Date (from)   

(to)   

Label Notes

Next, enter the Location Information (3). Location information includes all available information, either from the label or inferred, regarding the locality in which the insect was collected. This information will usually be found on the collection label, but may need to be looked up. A good resource for countries and their respective administrative divisions can be found at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Table\\_of\\_administrative\\_divisions\\_by\\_country](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Table_of_administrative_divisions_by_country)

Below are detailed field explanations and color coded examples of how Collection Details should be entered:

**Verbatim Locality** All of the location information should be entered into this field exactly as it appears on the label. Please do not add any translated or current names to this field. If there is no location information on the label, please enter “Not Stated” in this field.

**Country** Please enter the valid (current) country name in this field. This information may have to be looked up. Many times only a state or island is given. If the country is not able to be looked up, or if you are not able to determine the country, please leave this field blank.

**State/Province** Please enter the second political division in this field (i.e., state, province, territory). If none is given please leave this field blank.

**County** Please enter the third political division (i.e., county or parish) in this field.

**Precise Location** Please enter the specific locality information such as the distance from a landmark, a state park, mountain, etc.

**Elevation** Enter the elevation range in these fields. If only one measurement is given, please repeat in both the “to” and “from” fields. Using the drop down box, select “feet” or “meters”. If no elevation information is given, please leave these fields blank.

**Latitude/Longitude** To enter the latitude and longitude, first select the format from the drop down menu. You may select D°M’S” (Degree-Minute-Second) or Decimal. The fields will change depending on the format selected. If D°M’S” is selected, you should enter each number in its own field and then select the direction (Either North or South for Latitude and East or West for Longitude). If decimal is selected then the number should be entered exactly as written. Make sure to indicate any negative numbers (South Latitudes and West Longitudes are negative).



3. Location details

Verbatim Locality

Country

State/Province/Territory

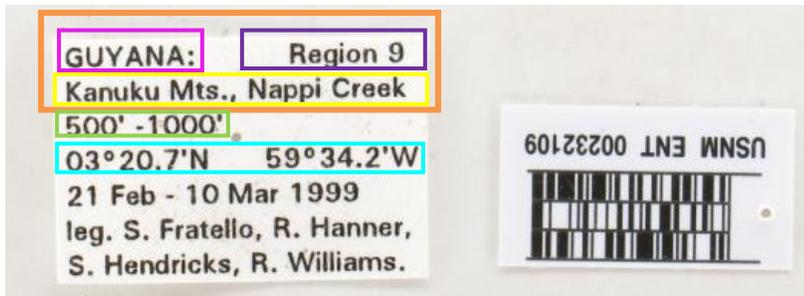
County

Precise Location

Elevation From  - To

Verbatim Latitude

Verbatim Longitude



3. Location details

Verbatim Locality

Country

State/Province/Territory

County

Precise Location

Elevation From  - To

Verbatim Latitude

Verbatim Longitude

After Location Information (3) has been added, you will see a section for Identification (4). The Identification section contains the scientific name of the insect and its sex (when available). Both of these fields are automatically filled. You will not need to enter any information.

**4. Identification** – If a label contains information on the name of the organism then record the name and associated information in this section [Shrink](#)

Scientific Name  Sex

The last section, Notes (5), is where you should enter any information that will help with validating your task. This could be a note that the label seemed to contain conflicting information, or that a handwritten label was illegible. If there is not any additional information that the validator may need, then you may leave this area blank.

The final step of label transcription is to click the “Submit for validation” button (circled in red) at the bottom of the page. After this has been selected, you may move on to the next specimen label. If you need to stop transcribing mid-label, you may select “Save unfinished record” to save the record and come back to it at a later time. You may also choose to “Skip” a label if you find it too difficult or just want to transcribe a different label. Also, if you have a question about a particular label, you may select “Create Forum Topic” to open a question

**5. Notes** Record any comments here that may assist in validating this task [Shrink](#)

Your Notes

Thank you again for taking the time to help us transcribe specimen labels! We could not do this without you!