

A Herbarium's most wanted; not dead nor alive. An overview of IPM at the Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

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The Herbarium at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, houses around 7 million vascular plant specimens, one of the largest collections in the world. The Herbarium contains a complex variety of collections storage areas with different environmental conditions and challenges. Collections are stored in wings built as early as 1877 up to modern climate-controlled vaults from 2010. Equally as important as risk from fire or flood, damage to the collections from pests is a top priority and several species of pests are known as major threats to Herbarium collections. Our IPM programme has operated successfully for many years and follows industry standards for best practice of IPM in the cultural heritage sector. Our well trained and dedicated IPM team employ a variety of different strategies and equipment to deliver a successful IPM programme, incorporating many elements such as deep freezing new incoming material, training staff to identify signs of an outbreak, keeping areas clean and tidy and the careful monitoring of insect traps. We target our responses to pest hotspots and changes in pest distribution and frequency as well as focusing on the identification of pests new to the Herbarium, such as the grey silverfish (*Ctenolepisma longicaudatum*). This overview uses examples of our most commonly found pests to illustrate our IPM practices and shows how careful identification is crucial to distinguish between pest and non pest species.

