

# “Deep Time” of Digitization: History of Biodiversity Digitization at National Museum of Natural History

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For over fifty years the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) has strived to increase and improve our digitization efforts. Throughout those years, biodiversity digitization has taken many different forms with ever-changing technology and improving accessibility. This poster provides a timeline with highlights of biodiversity digitization efforts at NMNH from inception to the present. When tracking the history of this work using a timeline, we are able to glimpse some of the milestones and progression: from achievements in mass digitization efforts, open access, 3D imaging, as well as enhancing and standardizing guidelines—all of which is improving the way we think about digital accessibility. One of the more obvious adaptations tracked in this timeline is the ever-changing advancement of technology. But no matter the tools and methods used throughout our history, one will notice that the implications are still the same: this digitization work is essential to help preserve our natural history collections, to better understand these collections, and to achieve broader outreach and greater accessibility. As stewards of the largest natural history collection in the world, utilizing biodiversity digitization is also vital to help us better understand the natural world and our place in it. Join us as we take a deep dive into the evolution of the Museum’s tools and methods, as well as its future goals and aspirations.

