



A Pan-European seed-list search system: ebgconsortiumindexseminum2009

A European Botanic Gardens Consortium initiative
<http://www.plantnetwork.org/ebg/>

EUROPEAN BOTANIC GARDENS CONSORTIUM

The switch from paper copy *Indices Seminum* to electronic seed-lists has been taking place for a number of years. However, although this is an environmentally attractive substitute, there is no doubt that such lists are often more time-consuming to access and search. As a consequence gardens have found that the number of requests often reduces dramatically, and much of the work in gathering materials and compiling the lists is wasted.

The European Botanic Gardens Consortium proposes harnessing the power of internet search engines to cross-reference all on-line *indices seminum* produced by European Botanic Gardens, and thus create a fully-searchable pan-European seed-list search facility. The idea is based upon the use of a simple code word – **ebgconsortiumindexseminum2009** – to provide a unique identifier to every on-line seed-list issued by a European garden during a given year.

Thus an internet search engine can be queried for this term plus a genus or even species name, thereby making the search for a particular taxon from current seed lists a work of moments. By adding a four-figure year at the end of the code word, it is hoped to avoid 'dead' pages building up over the years. This year should represent the year in which the list is valid, i.e. seed collected during 2008 would be in a list issued over the 2008/2009 winter, and would carry the year 2009.

Since no central organisation, compilation or databasing is required, there are no costs or administration overheads other than voluntary co-operation by participating seed-list managers over the coming years in adding the code word to their on-line seed lists.



Gardens that have responded to the first request to participate in the scheme.

How the The Pan-European seed-list search system works:

Any internet search engine can be queried for the key word plus a genus or even species name, thereby making the search for a particular taxon from current seed lists a work of moments. By adding a four figure year at the end of the code word it is hoped to avoid redundant pages building up over the years.

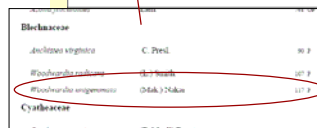
1. A search (right) using the code word plus *Woodwardia unigemmata* returns the Naples University Botanic Garden Index for 2009 (below) ...



2. ...because the on-line pdf file contains the code word on page 2 ...



4. The species can then be ordered through the desiderata form.



3. On page 5 of the catalogue, *Woodwardia unigemmata* is listed as item #117.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Any garden within Europe can take part in the scheme. There are no membership requirements, registrations or costs involved, other than producing an on-line seed list.
2. Both wild collected and/or cultivated plants may be included.
3. Issues of the CBD, in particular those governing Access and Benefit-sharing, Material Transfer Agreements, the International Plant Exchange Network (IPEN), as well as the legal authorization to share seeds are the responsibility of individual gardens, and no garden taking part is obligated to transfer seeds to third parties if they do not wish to do so.
4. For seed collected during the calendar year Jan 2008 to Dec 2008, the code word will be ebgconsortiumindexseminum2009. It must have no characters or punctuation attached at either end.
5. The word must occur at least once on every file of the on-line seed-list. The seed-list can be an HTML file, a text file or a pdf document, but cannot be an image file.
6. If you wish to include your seed-list in the system, then the webpage must be linked from a home page or scientific page on your web site, otherwise the page may not be visible to internet search engines.
7. If you have problems with the page not being found by search engines then please submit the URL to various Search Engines, or to myself, and I will place it on the following page – www.botanicgardens.ie/ebg/
8. Please try not use ebgconsortiumindexseminum2009 on bulletin boards or other internet documents other than seed lists, since otherwise these will clutter up searches for seeds.

Why your garden should participate

Any garden within Europe can take part in the scheme. There are no membership requirements, registrations or costs involved. Once a critical mass of gardens are involved, then the labour-saving that will result in searching for particular material will be a huge benefit to us all.

Please help us to help you by adjusting your on-line seed lists today!

For any enquiries about the system, please contact:
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