

LSU Museum of Natural Science

Section of Mammalogy

Specimen loans for non-destructive use:

1. To obtain a loan of mammal specimens from the LSUMNS:

- a. Send a signed request on institutional letterhead to the curator (Jake Esselstyn: esselstyn@lsu.edu) and collection manager (Toni Androski: aandroski@lsu.edu). The request should detail why the specimens are needed, how they will be used, how the results will be disseminated, and how they will be cared for. Be as specific as possible regarding which specimens and parts are needed and how the specimens will be used. Requests that are not well justified will be denied.
- b. The request must be counter-signed by the museum curator who will be responsible for the loan (unless the requester and the curator are the same).
- c. The requester must acknowledge the LSUMNS in publications that use the specimens, list voucher numbers in the publications, and send the LSUMNS a reprint of such publications.

When evaluating loan requests, we consider the following questions: Is the research likely to result in meaningful scientific progress? Does the researcher have the resources necessary to complete the project? Will the specimens be in danger? Does the borrower contribute to and support museum collections?

Loans are normally made for a period of 6 months. Extensions should be secured prior to the loan's expiration date. We do not send specimens to private individuals or institutions that lack proper facilities for housing specimens. Because loans are costly in terms of processing time, shipping expenses, and insurance, we may ask the borrower to pay shipping costs. Unfortunately, we are reluctant to send specimens outside the USA because of the increasing difficulty in dealing with courier services, in obtaining legal clearances, and the risks of loss or damage during import/export through customs. As such, international requests should be especially well justified.

Destructive sampling

The Section of Mammalogy will allow destructive sampling (e.g. for stable isotope studies) that does not cause extensive damage to the future value of specimens. We will generally support destructive sampling only if the material cannot be obtained from living populations because of permit issues, experimental design, political instability, or other constraints. The request process is the same as for a standard specimen loan (see above), but the bar for approval is higher.

Genetic sampling

Requests for tissue samples for DNA extraction (*including destructive requests of crusties, bones, or skin snips*) should be directed to the Section of Genetic Resources.