

A reference collection of the genus *Echinopsis*

Martin Lowry

Hessle, UK

m.lowry@hull.ac.uk

An introduction to the English National Collection of *Echinopsis* is presented. The collection began in 2000 as an amateur collection of *Lobivia* and was renamed to *Echinopsis* in 2005 to allow inclusion of *Echinopsis s.s.*, *Trichocereus* and *Acanthocalycium*. There are now more than 1200 accessions with each recognized species represented by multiple specimens from several populations. The majority of the specimens are associated with detailed location information. Special emphasis is placed on the maintenance of a detailed accession record for each specimen. This information includes name, field number, source, propagation status (field-collected plant or seed, habitat or commercial) and accession date, and is linked to a digital photographic image database, now containing over 2500 images, stored in Adobe Photoshop Elements. A hierarchical XML scheme of tags has been developed which allows rapid selection of images by a variety of criteria including species-name and collector abbreviation. The living collection was used extensively as a source of comparative material during the preparation of *The New Cactus Lexicon* and in future it is hoped it can provide a source of well-documented material for use in molecular phylogenetic studies.