

RARE BOOK CONSERVATION RECORD DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION REPORT

Date: 10/17/07

Conservator: Sarah Norris

Instructor: Chela Metzger

Call Number/Collection: QK 91.G4 1742

Author: Carolus Linnaeus

Imprint: 1742

Title: Genera Plantarum

Collation/foliation: xix, [1], 21-42, 527, [25] p

Frontmatter: * - ***** , 1 – 4; **body:** A – Zzz, 1 – 4 with interleaving sheets

Format: octavo

Dimensions (binding): H 21.5 x W 14.9 x T 7.5 (cm)

Dimensions (text block): H 20.4 x W 13.7 x T 6.5 (cm)

Background

Carolus Linnaeus (1707 – 1778) was a Swedish botanist and scientist who established the fundamental concepts of taxonomy. His *Genera Plantarum* chronicled the beginning of that work. This volume was printed in Holland in Latin with an introduction in Dutch. WorldCat shows approximately 30 libraries in the US that own the item, all items with the same publisher (Lugduni Batavorum : Apud Conradum Wishoff, et Georg. Jac. Wishoff, fil. Conr.), publication date, pagination, and height dimension. All volumes indicate that they are a second edition: "Editio 2. aucta & emendate." All volumes contain one leaf of engraved plate illustrations where this volume has two; however, it may be that a folio has been counted as a leaf in the other WorldCat entries. The author's name also appears as Carl Linne (non-Latinized) or Carl von Linne (after ennoblement).

Description and Condition

The binding seems to be contemporary with the volume. It is a half-style binding with rigid paste boards covered in vegetable tanned sheep and marbled paper. The boards are laced on and unshaped, although the corners have been bent in toward the textblock with use. They display slight cracking, which has slightly split the marbled paper. These cracks appear to have been caused by the pressure of handling the volume, as they flex slightly when the volume is held at the foreedge. Some of the exposed board edges and corners appear to have been consolidated, perhaps with animal glue. The leather is blind tooled with simple lines on the spine and covers. Three lines appear on the covers along the spine and corners. Double lines appear around the bands and at the head and tail of the spine. The leather is light damaged, abraded, scarred, torn, and friable. The attachment of the grain layer to the flesh layer is tenuous, and small fragments of the spine covering release when the book is handled. No closures are present.

The text block is sewn on four partially recessed, twisted hemp cord supports. The sewing is two-on and all-along, presumably done with s-twist linen thread. Front bead endbands are sewn on strips of parchment. The endbands were originally stuck-on. However, the adhesive has failed, and now the endbands are only attached where they were adhered on top of the boards. They gap away from the textblock when the volume is opened. Silk thread forms their decorative layer, which was once probably pink and white or perhaps red and yellow. The thread has disintegrated at the tail. The spine has no linings, and is covered only with the leather spine

covering of the half-style binding. The adhesive is failing and the leather gaps from the spine at the head and tail, especially when the volume is opened. The text block was moderately rounded with no shoulders. Due to text block drag from vertical shelving, the round has flattened in the middle at the head and tail, producing a slightly convex portion at the spine and a more pronounced convex portion at the foreedge. The edges of the textblock are sprinkled with a pink color that might have originally been red.

Each page of the body of the text is separated by an interleaving sheet. All paper is handmade laid. The text pages are all of one type of paper, which is beige, slightly soft, and flexible, with laid lines running vertically. The interleaving pages, endsheets, and pastedowns are all of a second type of paper, brighter in color, thicker, and smoother, with the laid lines running horizontally (cross-grained to the printed paper). This paper displays a type of foxing in which small black or brown dots are surrounded by gray halos. Each section of the main body contains text folios interspersed with interleaving folios. One interleaving sheet is tipped with paste into the middle of each section, and alternating sections have an interleaving sheet as their outer folio. Endleaves are sewn and tipped on. Their outer leaves function as pastedowns, and pasted down stubs are visible beneath the pastedown. The endpapers display noticeable grime. Tears and losses are present on the foldout leaves of engraved plates and the second to last page of the index.

The volume is printed in black printer's ink with visible type impression. Ink squash is visible in the printed portions, and slight haloing is present in the engraved plates. The ink appears to be stable. Graphite cataloguing annotations on the front endpaper probably indicate a purchase price for the volume.

Proposed Treatment

Minimal:

Consolidate flaking leather.

Surface clean fly leaves with soot sponge.

Flatten and mend foldout leaves with engraved plate illustrations.

Mend second to last page of index.

Re-adhere tenuously attached leather to corners.

Re-adhere gapping leather to spine.

Fill shoulder gaps with toned tissue.

Medium:

Consolidate flaking leather.

Surface clean fly leaves with soot sponge.

Flatten and mend foldout leaves with engraved plate illustrations.

Mend second to last page of index.

Re-adhere tenuously attached leather to corners.

Remove leather spine covering.

Re-line spine to relieve stress on fragile leather covering and support the spine when opening.

Re-back volume with dyed leather or toned Japanese tissue.

Re-adhere leather spine covering over new re-back material.

Materials Used

- 2% Gelatin
- 1% Klucel G
- SC 6000
- Kozo tissue
- Usumino tissue
- Liquitex Professional Acrylics

- Precipitated wheat starch paste mixed 1:4 with distilled water, cooked 20 minutes (Colophon)
- Lascaux
- Alum tawed leather
- Calfskin leather
- Mylar
- 3 mm Ethafoam
- 20 point lignin-free board (Conservation Resources)

Treatment Steps

1. 11/6 (1 hr) Tried consolidating spine with gelatin. Caused unacceptable darkening.
2. 11/8 (1 hr) Consolidated spine with very light coating of 50/50 Klucel G / SC 6000. Coating required to minimize darkening was so light that consolidation was minimal.
3. 11/10 (2 hr) Removed leather spine covering and built a housing for it.
4. 11/27 (2 hr) Removed remaining suede layer from spine and applied kozo tissue lining with wheat starch paste up to the edges of the parchment endbands.
5. 11/29 (3 hr) Adhered parchment endbands to spine folds with very light application of wheat starch paste. Applied wheat starch paste lightly over the thread ends on the parchment to protect them from Lascaux. Applied kozo spine lining over parchment endbands with Lascaux. Wrapped boards in mylar and paper. Applied oversized alum tawed spine lining with Lascaux and trimmed to size.
6. 12/6 (4 hr) Cut covering calfskin leather. Trimmed edge of alum tawed spine lining and sanded surface for better adhesion. Lifted covering leather outside and inside of boards, cutting tabs to leave space for upcoming new leather turn-ins.
7. 2/1 (3 hr) Edge pared and used spokeshave on calfskin.
8. 2/4 (4 hr) Lifted covering leather more inside the boards. Lifted under parchment endbands where they rest on the boards. Wrapped textblock. Stabilized loose marbled paper on board edges with Lascaux. Adhered new covering leather on spine and boards with Lascaux.
9. 2/11 (2 hr) Turned new covering leather in and adhered with Lascaux.
10. 2/18 (2 hr) Shaved edges of new material at turn-ins. Readhered lifted areas at board edges and inside boards with Lascaux.
11. 2/25 (2 hr) Sanded new covering leather for better adhesion. Adhered original spine piece with Lascaux.
12. 2/28 (2 hr) Flattened foldout pages and mended second to last page of index with usumino tissue previously toned with acrylic paints.
13. 4/10 (1.5 hr) Made mylar sleeve to compensate for minimal consolidation and control leather loss during handling. Made bookshoe to protect surrounding volumes on the shelf from mylar's static. Included slim Ethafoam textblock support to prevent future dragging.

Total: 29.5 hours