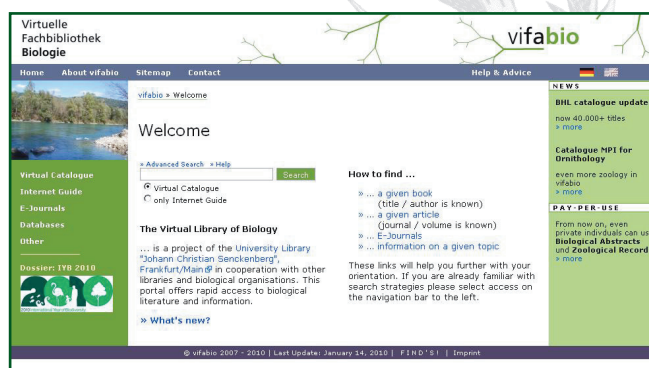


vifabio – Subject portal for the various facets of biology

Judith Dähne



vifabio – the Virtual Library of Biology is a portal for biological subject information and has been online since 2007 (Dähne 2007; Kasperek et al. 2009). The English version of the portal is available at www.vifabio.d?lang=en.

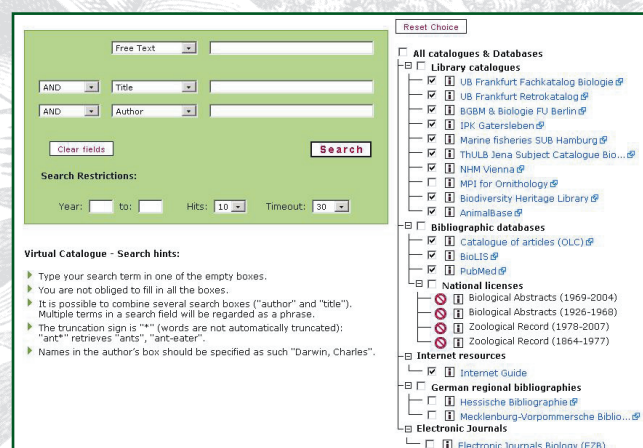


vifabio's goal is to enable searching of subject-relevant literature from libraries and the Internet with one search query and to make access to texts easier via links. Its target groups are biologists in research, teaching and learning as well as anyone interested in natural history. For vifabio, it is important to cover biology in its entire breadth and to meet the different requirements of users demanding a good library service: not only molecular biologists, who only want to search the latest journals, but also taxonomists, who require species descriptions from the 18th century, should be able to find what they need.

vifabio is a project from the University Library Johann Christian Senckenberg in Frankfurt am Main (Germany), which has already overseen

special collection areas of biology, botany and zoology for decades. In Germany, the responsibilities for various subjects are divided amongst libraries. Being a library of a special collection area involves acquiring all pertinent publications of the field through either purchase or exchange, cataloguing them and making them accessible to users. The vifabio portal is funded by the German Research Foundation and supported by further project partners.

The biological sciences section of the Frankfurt catalogue as well as the catalogues of project partners in Berlin, Gatersleben, Hamburg, Jena, Müncheberg, Seewiesen and Vienna are included in searches of the Virtual Catalogue. BHL, Animalbase and numerous bibliographic databases, such as PubMed, as well as vifabio's Internet Guide are also integrated. The search is designed as a metasearch: the search query is sent in parallel to the included databases and catalogues; the results are returned and displayed in groups of ten hits. In the detailed view of the results, links to document delivery services such as subito (fee-based) as well as to the Electronic Journal Library of Regensburg (EZB) or the Journal Database (ZDB) (for journal articles) or the Karlsruhe Virtual Catalogue (KVK) (for books) are displayed in order to simplify access to full text or print.



The Internet Guide created by vifabio is also offered as a separate module. Subject-relevant Internet resources, which are classified with the hierarchically-structured BioDDC classification system (Kasperek 2008; based on the internationally-widespread Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC)), can be not only searched, but also browsed by subject, geographical region and resource type. If a search brings up no hits, the BioWebSearch tool helps further. The homepages directly indexed by vifabio, and their related subordinate pages, are processed using the Nutch software package so that full-text search of the site contents is possible.

The online databases included in the Internet Guide – currently over 600 – are also included in a standalone Database Guide to give scientists direct access to these important sources of information.

vifabio offers additional services such as access to electronic journals, lists of new titles, subject dossiers and other features such as the overview of important digitisation projects described in the following article.

vifabio is being constantly further developed and connections to more catalogues and databases are being prepared. As a new module, a subject-specific repository will make documents such as postprints and publications from scientific organisations more visible and allow long-term backup.

Contact: info@vifabio.de

Dr. Judith Dähne; University Library Johann Christian Senckenberg, Frankfurt/Main, Germany

References

(Full texts available at: www.vifabio.de/about/vifabio-info.html#infoMaterial)

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