



Two perspectives on the Decadal Plan: public engagement, and the plight of parasitoid wasps.

Erinn P. Fagan-Jeffries (The University of Adelaide & South Australian Museum).

Meeting the challenges proposed by the Taxonomy Australia Decadal Plan will require a layered approach. We need to think bigger, and work more collaboratively with each other and with the public. In the field of hymenopteran taxonomy, where we deal with the issues associated with of a hyper-diverse insect order, there is considerable debate about the use of DNA barcodes as the main evidence for species documentation. This presentation will give an overview of the different approaches (both more traditional and perhaps quite radical) that are occurring within the hymenopteran (particularly the parasitoid wasp) community to accelerate biodiversity documentation, and discuss some of the issues and possibilities around rapid taxonomy using DNA data. I will also present a summary of the collaborative citizen science project Insect Investigators, that during 2022-23 partnered taxonomists with regional schools to name new species. Citizen science, and engaging people throughout Australia with the process of taxonomy, may not make the taxonomic process faster, but it has potential to make it more relevant, better supported, and with greater benefits to both society and to biodiversity conservation.

Erinn Fagan-Jeffries: erinn.fagan-jeffries@adelaide.edu.au