

**THE AUSTRALIAN  
PLANT PEST DATABASE**

**Annual  
Summary 2025**

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## What is the APPD?

The Australian Plant Pest Database (APPD) is a secure and restricted national online database of voucher plant pest and pathogen specimens, aggregating records from 16 reference collections around Australia. These reference collections include not only physical specimens of plant pests and their local relatives or lookalikes, but also the information on where, when and how they were collected. The specimens may be whole or partial organisms and often have historical pest records.

By collating information from major reference collections, APPD is a valuable resource for a range of government and research stakeholders, including diagnosticians, collection managers, biosecurity and policy officers, entomologists, plant pathologists, scientists, and technical officers. It is used in the support of national and international market access requests and policy decision-making – this may include justifying measures to exclude potentially-harmful exotic pests, diagnosis of specimens in Emergency Plant Pest responses, and supporting research on established taxa.

To fulfil these functions, the APPD allows users to view historical pest presence data, conduct host association checks, and request access to specimens for diagnostic or study purposes. Record information includes specimen details and taxonomy, and may include host taxonomy and geospatial information.



## APPD content

### Aggregation in a convenient interface

- Record information includes specimen details and taxonomy, host taxonomy where known, geospatial information, and approved community comments.
- To assist in dataset refining and visualisation, species may be grouped or mapped, for example by host species, date collected, or by the state or territory in which the specimen was collected.
- Record data may also be downloaded by users to perform further analyses.

### Range of species

- In the APPD, a pest includes the following biological classes of organisms, where a species may adversely affect agricultural production or a natural ecosystem: arthropods, including insects, mites and arachnids; gastropods, including slugs and snails; nematodes; fungi; viruses; bacteria; and weeds.

### National collation from contributing collections

National	Australian National Insect Collection (ANIC)
New South Wales	Agricultural Scientific Collections Unit (ASCU)
	Plant Pathology Herbarium (DAR)
Northern Territory	Northern Territory Economic Insect Reference Collection (NTEIRC)
	Northern Territory Plant Pathology Herbarium (DNAP)
Queensland	Queensland Plant Pathology Herbarium (BRIP)
	Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations Insect Collection (BSES)
	Queensland Museum (QM)
	Queensland Primary Industries Insect Collection (QDPC)
Tasmania	Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG)
	Tasmanian Plant Pest Database (TPPD)
Victoria	Victorian Agricultural Insect Collection (VAIC)
	Victorian Plant Pathology Herbarium (VPRI)
Western Australia	Western Australian Culture Collection (WAC)
	Invertebrate Collection Database (ICDB)
South Australia	Waite Insect and Nematode Collection (WINC)



## Key APPD metrics 2025

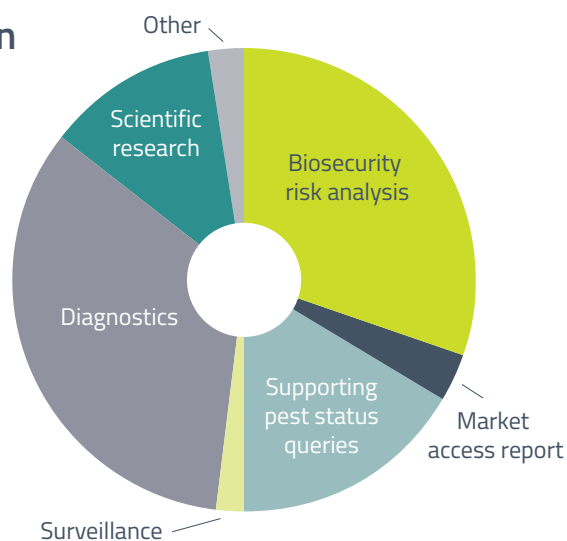
Contributing collections	16
Specimen records	1.4 million
Users	440

Since its beginning in 2002, the APPD has grown from 46,000 to over 1.4 million records in 2025




### Data usage during 2025

- APPD data was primarily used to support biosecurity risk analyses by government biosecurity professionals, usually to support domestic and international market access or undertake risk assessments.
- Other significant uses included for scientific research, and diagnostics for approved projects.
- While the APPD cannot be used as a sole source of data to determine pest status in Australia, it is an important supporting resource for pest status queries.

### Proportion of APPD data uses



# Snapshot: improvements for the APPD in 2025

- In 2023, PHA worked with consultants to identify recommendations to improve the user interface and ensure a smooth user experience within the APPD. These changes, including improvements to the search function and specimen records layout, have been rolled out through 2024 and 2025.
  - Simplified user interface for search and advanced search functions 
  - Improved grouping and analysis of search results 
  - Enhanced mapping options, enabling users to better view concentration of records 
- Improved name matching was introduced in the search function in 2025, especially benefiting searches for short species names.
- Specimen records now include data currency fields such as date of last edit.

## Biosecurity Online Training (BOLT)

The [APPD BOLT Course](#), restricted to approved users of the APPD, provides an overview of how to use the APPD. It explains how to navigate the system, how to narrow down specimen queries and download datasets, as well as how to undertake useful functions such as grouped data and mapping. It can serve as an onboarding tool to provide a thorough introduction to all aspects of the APPD, or as general user guide for infrequent users.

## 2025 system highlights

### 8 system releases

*These included enhancements and maintenance supporting user interface and navigation improvements, search and filtering improvements, security improvements, API corrections, and enhancing ease of genus name searches.*

### Over 99% system uptime

### Resolution of 50 operational support requests

*Primarily regarding standard access and account update requests, with some queries around system use and content.*

### ITSM capacity and cybersecurity uplift

*Robust systems and procedures developed and integrated into routine system delivery.*

## Training and support resources

- Throughout 2025 PHA maintained updates to the APPD Knowledge Base, supporting APPD users in navigating the APPD and downloading data.
- PHA continued to develop the APPD Admin Guide, supporting Reference Collection Managers to upload and manage data.

# Future improvements and priorities

## System enhancements and technical improvements

- The team at PHA are continuously seeking opportunities for improvement, and we work with the APPD Steering Committee to define annual priorities to enhance and refine technical aspects of the system.
- System enhancements for 2026 are underway, with priorities including a refresh of the APPD access process and improved clarity on specimen collection dates.

## Training and user support

- PHA will continue to identify user needs and deliver resource and training opportunities to APPD users and our valued content contributors. In 2026 this will include updating resources targeted at our upcoming system enhancements, delivering workshops as required, and data upload training for contributors.
- PHA welcomes user requests for support or suggestions for specific training.

## Data quality and collection engagement

- Data currency and data quality are crucial themes in our current priorities, and we are working with reference collections to enable efficient and accurate data uploads.
- Improvements around the visibility of data currency to users are also being implemented under new enhancement priorities.

## Acknowledgements






The APPD team would like to thank all stakeholders for their continued contributions to specimen records and system improvement. The APPD is endorsed by the [National Biosecurity Committee](#) as nationally significant infrastructure for Australia's diagnostic capability, and is funded by jurisdictional and federal Government contributions.

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