

The Integrated Taxonomic Information System

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The Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS) is a scientifically credible, quality-controlled, standard reference for taxonomic information on species. It encompasses all major taxonomic groups, with a focus on North America and its surrounding waters, including world coverage where feasible. Currently it contains about 400,000 names, both scientific and vernacular. ITIS has been developed through a partnership of US agencies, non-governmental organizations, and Canadian and Mexican governmental groups, in collaboration with the systematics community and other list keepers. International collaborations also include the Global Biodiversity Information Facility and Species 2000. This presentation provides an overview of ITIS; history of its development; and, review of technical aspects of the database, data processes, and available tools. Benefits of ITIS use, with examples of uses and users, and plans for its continuing evolution are presented. I close with discussion of the challenges encountered and lessons learned in the development of the Integrated Taxonomic Information System.