

### ***Abstract***

In 1983 Catherine Fowler completed a pioneering study of Uto-Aztecan cultural history, focused on locating the Proto-Uto-Aztecan homeland by linking reconstructed PUA biological terms to the historic distribution of biological species labeled by these terms. Others have studied loan patterns in biological nomenclature among non-genetically related languages to develop models of migration and linguistic and cultural convergence in prehistoric periods. These two complementary approaches require an immense dataset of biological terminology from diverse languages. To achieve this dataset for Mesoamerica, an area characterized both by extensive migration and great biodiversity, this project will create an innovative portal to facilitate the exchange of information on Indigenous nomenclature, classification and use of biotaxa. This portal will enable a community of scholars to share material that would otherwise languish for years before, if ever, being disseminated in a print publication.

### ***Statement of humanities significance***

This project will create a unique resource on traditional ecological knowledge for research into Mesoamerican cultural history. An interdisciplinary community (anthropologists, linguists, botanists, entomologists, native speakers) will be able to upload (photos for identification, nomenclature for analysis, uses for comments) and search the material in multiple ways. Eventually an interface will be opened to the public for dissemination of Indigenous natural history knowledge in Mesoamerica.

### ***Statement of innovation***

Although several sites exist where taxonomic specialists and the general public may interact, these are generally oriented to scientific identifications of photos. This project will be innovative in several respects: it will be interdisciplinary (social scientists and biologists); it will target a research goal, cultural history; it will be multiethnic (promoting Indigenous participation); and it will pioneer an innovative information structure to facilitate discovery, annotation, and research.