The Tree of Life Web Project: First Generation Tools for Treehouse Builders

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NSCL 9333715 • Collections Track

The Tree of Life Web Project

http://tolweb.org

The Tree of Life Web Project (TOL) is an open-access, database-driven system providing information on the diversity of organisms on Earth. The collaborative effort has been ongoing since the 1980s and is supported by the National Science Foundation.

The project currently provides over 5,000 web pages with encyclopedic content to about 12,000 visitors per month.

Each TOL page contains information about a specific group of organisms, and the pages are linked together hierarchically, in the form of a generalized tree of life.

The exceptional feature of this project is that it allows users to contribute their own unique content in the form of a new group of organisms.

The TOL project encompasses the development of tools in the following categories:

- **Investigations**
  - Treebase: a platform for the examination of molecular, genetic, and morphological data to understand evolutionary relationships.
  - ToL Explorer: a tool for exploring the Tree of Life.

- **Teacher Resources**
  - These pages provide lesson plans and activities that present evolutionary concepts in an engaging and interactive manner.

- **Scientific Biographies**
  - TOL biographies are different than traditional biographies.

- **Stories**
  - Fun & Games: TOL offers a variety of games and activities to engage users.
  - Art & Culture: TOL showcases art and culture related to the Tree of Life.

- **Next Steps**
  - Submit new tree data items or event updates.
  - Explore the TOL at new and improved levels of detail.

- **Tools for Treehouse Builders**
  - To facilitate contributions by treehouse builders, the TOL provides tools and guidelines to register as treehouse builders and upload treehouse contributions through user-friendly submission forms.

- **Phylogenetic Relevance**
  - By making the data and treehouse contributions accessible and engaging, the TOL encourages the scientific community to contribute to the understanding of the Tree of Life.

- **Sharing Media Files**
  - The TOL media information include a comprehensive collection of media files for the Tree of Life.

- **Submit**
  - Submit new tree data items or event updates.
  - Explore the TOL at new and improved levels of detail.

- **Predicated**
  - New tree data items or event updates are submitted to the TOL.

- **Preview treehouse**
  - Preview the treehouse contributions before they are submitted.

- **Attach treehouse**
  - Attach the treehouse contributions to your own treehouse.

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**Learning with the Tree of Life**

The Tree of Life project aims to develop teaching tools in the following categories:

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