

Taxonomy

Taxonomy is the science of identification, naming and classification of living organisms. Taxonomy uses a hierarchal structure that classifies organisms from very broad categories to very specific categories. In terms of scientific classification, the broadest categories are Kingdoms while the most specific ones are Species and Subspecies.

Scientific classification system:

- Kingdom
 - Phylum
 - Class
 - Order
 - Family
 - Genus
 - Species
 - Subspecies (if present)

One way to remember the classification system is to use the mnemonic: King Phillip Calls Out For Good Soup.

When writing species names, it is important to remember the names are in Latin and need to be italicized or underlined. The Genus is always capitalized, and both the Genus and Species names should be underlined. For example, the scientific name for Short-tailed shrew is Blarina brevicauda which can also be written as *Blarina brevicauda*. All other taxonomic classification such as Families, Orders, etc should be capitalized. Information on the Order, Family, Genus, Species and Subspecies are provided in field guides. The scientific classification for Short-tailed shrews is as follows:

Kingdom	→	Animalia
Phylum	→	Chordata
Class	→	Mammalia
Order	→	Insectivora
Family	→	Soricidae
Genus	→	<i>Blarina</i>
Species	→	<i>brevicauda</i>
Subspecies	→	N/A

