The Natural History Museum Naturalis (RMNH) in Leiden, The Netherlands has the largest collection of Suriname Odonata in the world. Most of them have been collected by Dirk Geijzkes and Jean Belle, between 1938 and 1975, but tens of others have contributed to the collection. The collection has been well kept and the time has come to put the collection to other uses. Geijzkes estimated the collection to contain 20,000 specimens in 1970; only hundreds of specimens have been added since.

Suriname is a relatively small country in the large Neotropics, its fauna is a part of the Guyana region: the region north of the Amazon and east of the Orinoco river. The first species known to occur in Suriname was Erythodaplax umbata as published by DeGeer in 1773. Around 1930, before Dirk Geijzkes started to study its dragonflies, the number of species known from the country was 60; in 1970 it numbered 260 and the checklist of Jean Belle (2002) lists 280 species. The last species added to the list is Chalcopezus sobres, found at the Brownsberg in 2006.

Goals
- Making the data from the collection available and accessible.
- Getting a better understanding of which species occur in Suriname, their distribution and habitats where they occur.

Methods
- Entering all data of the collection into a database. We have started with the Aeshnidae, a relatively well-known family with not too many species.
- Making distribution maps and flight diagrams based on the collection data. Most location names can be traced, while helpful lists are made available by Piet van Doenes and the National Zoological Collection of Suriname (NZCS) in Paramaribo.
- Checking identifications and comparing specimens with descriptions and literature. The larger part of the collection was identified by Dirk Geijzkes and Jean Belle. Recent publications and opinions were not included and there are still boxes of unnamed specimens and probably even some unnamed species.
- Developing keys for the identification of Odonata in Suriname. Next to specialist keys, identification keys for the commoner species in the area around Paramaribo are possible, useful for non-specialists. This might also been used for creating environmental awareness (among children).
- Expand a website on the Suriname dragonflies, as has been developed some years ago (www.libellen.org/suriname). At the moment most parts of the website are in Dutch with some parts (e.g. the checklist) in English.

The first results of our project are presented on the website under ‘artikelen’ (articles). The database now holds about 1400 records of all Suriname specimens of the Aeshnidae, from both the pinned and the papered collection. Examples of distribution maps for Gynacantha francesca and G. membrosanalis are given in Figs 1 & 2.

Dennis Paulson and Rosser Garrison have given their support while cooperation has been set up with Jean Francois de La Salle (France) and with Jur DeMarmels (Venezuela) on Odonata of French Guyana and Venezuela respectively. We are still in need of a contact in northern Brazil. Some financial support has been given to the senior author by the Uttenboogaart-Eliassen Foundation for collecting trips in 1989 and 2006 and travel grants to work on collections.