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## Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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Title: Working Party on Training of Natural History Technicians

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Good display techniques were essential to compete with the impact of film and television. Was there any purpose in collecting further local natural history material when most of the essential information could be stored in an information file? Rare and extinct natural history material poses a problem for curators in that if subjected to the rigors of display it will have a finite life. He summarised the situation by expressing the view that the public face of museums must have good display techniques, lots of specimens and animation where appropriate.

The general discussion which followed was wide ranging and therefore almost impossible to summarise. However the following recommendations to the Association were agreed.

1. That provision should be made at a future conference for the presentation of papers dealing with the value and use of natural history collections to be received by the whole conference.
2. That the Museums Association become members of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, thereby acknowledging the role of environmental conservation as part of the museum profession.

John R. A. Gray  
Principal Officer, Museums  
Bolton Museum

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#### WORKING PARTY ON TRAINING OF NATURAL HISTORY TECHNICIANS

At the BCG Committee Meeting of September 13th it was decided to set up a Working Party to consider the training of Natural History Technicians working in Museums. As a first stage the group has been asked to produce a discussion document outlining general areas of expertise in which Natural History Curators can expect trained technicians to be proficient. Particular reference will be made to points of possible overlap with taxidermy training and the responsibilities of the Taxidermist as opposed to the Natural History Technician. The syllabus of formal courses available for training Natural History Technicians will be examined and their shortcomings in respect of Museum requirements will be defined.

Will anyone with strong views on this subject or who can offer information on training courses in their region please contact me within the next two or three weeks.

John Mathias,  
Keeper of Biology  
Leicester Museum

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