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A CATALOGUE OF NATURAL SCIENCE COLLECTIONS IN NORTH-EAST ENGLAND WITH BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE COLLECTORS

Edited by Peter Davis and Christopher Brewer

Published by the North of England Museums Service, 1986. Price £9.50 (inc p&p).
ISBN 0 9510948 0 7

This weighty tome computed by Spires, printed by laser and produced by high quality photocopy represents the culmination of seven years work (by humans) amassing data relating to Natural Science material in Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham and Cleveland.

The main catalogue ALPHABETICAL INDEX TO THE COLLECTIONS gives an alphabetical listing of 1049 records where the key element is the surname of the collector.

There follows 101 pages of BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE COLLECTORS which amounts to a publication in its own right, listing details of 466 collectors made possible by the ability of the Spires database package to handle textual data.

Two further indexes list the data in TAXONOMIC order and GEOGRAPHIC (place of origin of the material) order respectively.

It is natural to compare this publication with the REGISTER OF NATURAL SCIENCE COLLECTIONS IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND published in 1981. Having done this, I personally prefer the printed format of the earlier publication and find the Associated Collectors Index a valuable section lacking in the publication under review.

The present publication benefits by pagination, not so necessary in the alphabetical listing but most helpful in the Taxonomic and Geographic indexes.

Having played a small part in the yet to be published work of the All Midlands Collections Research Unit I can appreciate the amount of time and effort that has gone into the production of this catalogue. All concerned are to be congratulated on producing a publication worthy of a place in the library of anyone interested in the whereabouts and future well-being of Natural Science collections.

Geoff. Halfpenny
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AN ATLAS OF THE WATER BEETLES OF NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM

by M.D. Eyre, S.G. Ball and G.N. Foster

Northumberland Biological Research Centre
Special Publication No.1, 1985

Published by Northumberland Biological Records Centre, The Hancock Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne. Price £5.00

This is a 66 page booklet spirally bound in thin card covers. The bulk of the publication is taken up by two sections. The first is a list of species together with the tetrads from which they have been recorded. The second section contains tetrad maps for the more commonly recorded species. For each species one sentence describing habitat and localities is appended either to the species list or the tetrad map. Although two symbols are used on the maps, I could not find a key to them.

Presumably they refer to two date classes as defined in the species list. There are detailed introductory sections on the history of recording water beetles in the area and on the topography of the region accompanied by informative maps.

Modern records mainly derive from one of the authors (GNF), and for such a large area the coverage is remarkably good. Older records have obviously been researched very thoroughly and go back to 1892. A full bibliography is appended.

I would have preferred to see more interpretation of the records, but this is a very complete work and as such will be of interest and value to all students of water beetles.

Derek Lott
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