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## Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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Author(s): Jewett, S. L.

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# Techniques

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Paper specifications for spirit collection labels.

The following information arrived in the form of a request from the Fishes Division of the Smithsonian in Washington who are trying to enlist partners in a scheme to have manufactured a large batch of special paper they use (and have found to be the best over years of testing) for labelling spirit specimens. It is probably too late now for readers of the Newsletter to be included in the purchase, but the note is printed here for the relevant technical information it contains. Samples are available from the Smithsonian.

The Committee on Curatorial Supplies and Practices, of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, has been researching label paper for use in alcoholic specimen collections. Our consensus is that Byron Weston Resistall Ledger no 36, which has been in use in the USNM's and other collections for many years, is still the best available considering all requirements (durability, longevity in alcohol, ability to feed through a laser printer, takes ink and pencil well, etc.). The paper is 100% cotton rag and is specially manufactured to incorporate the "Resistall" treatment, which allows it to withstand long-term storage in alcohol or other fluids.

Since the paper is only manufactured to order, a special run by the paper mill is required to produce it. It appears that all remaining stock from previous runs, that had been stored at paper distributing companies, has been exhausted. Yet a number of museums are urgently in need of a new supply of paper. These facts have led to an effort by this committee to initiate a joint purchase of paper from the Byron Weston Company. Les Knapp of the Smithsonian Oceanographic Sorting Center will be coordinating this activity.

Preliminary estimates indicate that the paper will cost approximately \$198.00 per 100 lbs, with the additional costs for cutting, perforating and/or hole-punching for use with tractor feed devices.

Please respond to the following questions if you are interested in purchasing the paper:

1. Do you want the paper in sheet form, in continuous rolls, or both? If in cut sheets, what size? Do you want continuous sheets with accordian folding?
2. What is the quantity you need (in terms of pounds)? [See below]
3. How urgent is your need?

To give you some idea of a weight to no-of-labels conversion factor, the USNM Fish Division uses the paper in continuous

rolls, producing labels 5" wide. We estimate that one roll (15" outer diameter, 3" core diameter, approx 33 lbs) produces approx 10,000 labels on an average length of 3".

For those of you who do not require ledger weight paper, you may be interested to know that a large order of Byron Weston Resistall Index 110 has recently been purchased by Texas Tech University Press, PO Box 4240, Lubbock, TX 79409; phone (806)742-2768 (ask for Lee Daniels or Dildford Carter). This paper has the same Resistall treatment as the ledger paper, is also 100% cotton rag, but is of heavier weight. The index paper is used in the Mammal Division in the USNM for bone and skin tags. The main drawback of this paper for catalog labels is it's bulk. It apparently does not feed through laser printers and is a bit heavy for other computer-generated paper labels.

Please respond to this query as soon as possible. If I have not heard from you by September 18, I will assume you do not have an immediate interest.

Susan L Jewett  
Chair  
ASIH Committee on Curatorial Supplies  
and Practices  
c/o Division of Fishes,  
RM WG-12, NMNH  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington DC 20560  
USA

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Subscription rates are £6.00 for individual membership and £10.00 for institutional membership. Contact Adam Wright, Herbert Museum, Jordan Well, Coventry, for application forms.

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Edited by John Mathias, Leicestershire Museums Service, 96 New Walk, Leicester LE1 6TD (Tel: 0533 554100 ext.3030) to whom all contributions should be sent. Back numbers are available from the Editor.

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