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REVIEW: Bibliography of catalogues of type specimens in world's zoological and palaeozoological collections

by Wiktor, J. & Rydzewski, W.

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The stimulus for this catalogue was the XIV International Congress in Copenhagen in 1953 which stressed the importance of type specimens to science. Professor Wladyslaw Rydzewski of the Museums of Natural History, Wroclaw University began work on the catalogue and work was continued by Jadwiga Wiktor on the death of Professor Rydzewski. The bibliography comprises a catalogue of type specimens of living and fossil animals. It is divided into two parts: Zoological and Palaeozoological and there is also a supplement of additional material found during editing the first part.

The bibliography is arranged in 9 sections: a preface; an introduction which describes the kinds of catalogues which have been included; the zoological classification used in the bibliography; a list of abbreviations to zoological taxa; a list of institutions known to have zoological and palaeozoological collections with references to authors; the Zoological catalogue; the Palaeozoological catalogue, and an index to authors names (with the exception of the Preface and Introduction, these are repeated in the supplement).

The main parts of the bibliography (the Zoological and Palaeozoological catalogues) begin with a catalogue of catalogues, followed by details of individual catalogues arranged alphabetically by author under each main taxonomic division. Where the catalogue is part of a general catalogue this is indicated and the cross reference given.

From my limited knowledge of catalogues of types, this appears to be a comprehensive compilation. All the catalogues which I looked up were included and the index and cross references worked well (at least four current BCG members are cited as authors). Compiling such a catalogue is an arduous and time-consuming task and Jadwiga Wiktor and the late Professor Ryzewski have made a valuable contribution to systematic zoology and palaeozoology.

Geoff Stansfield