



NatSCA

Natural Sciences Collections Association

<http://www.natsca.org>

Biology Curators Group Newsletter

Title: Pest Control in Museums: Survey

Author(s): Not Listed.

Source: Not Listed. (1985). Pest Control in Museums: Survey. *Biology Curators Group Newsletter, Vol 4 No 2*, 50.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/1265>

NatSCA supports open access publication as part of its mission is to promote and support natural science collections. NatSCA uses the Creative Commons Attribution License (CCAL) <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/> for all works we publish. Under CCAL authors retain ownership of the copyright for their article, but authors allow anyone to download, reuse, reprint, modify, distribute, and/or copy articles in NatSCA publications, so long as the original authors and source are cited.

The monetary value of our comparatively miniscule collection in Rotherham was brought home to me several years ago when I had to give an insurance valuation. We have a policy of collecting local material, and it is almost impossible to buy a collection of insects, mammal skins, shells, etc. from a specific locality or from a specific county/district. The only way I could expect to re-establish a local collection in a few years' time was to employ a team to collect, identify, mount and catalogue one from scratch. Immediately the collection becomes worth tens of thousands of pounds. If you have an important collection from New Zealand, Sri Lanka or Hawaii then the replacement cost would be somewhat higher.

At a time of financial restraint it is unrealistic to suggest that we should all insist on paying a commercial rate for our natural history specimens, but we can appraise our committees of their value. A note which tells them that the small collection of butterflies donated by a local naturalist is worth £25,000 will have a much greater impact than one which merely records it as a free gift. If a collection is offered for sale we should not try to beat the vendor down to a ridiculously low figure. If our long-term strategy is to persuade our masters (both political and professional) to rank natural history alongside fine art then we must begin the process of education soon. A request for a small fortune to buy an important collection will probably be turned down, so we must do it gradually by agreeing to pay a fair price. I believe that the only way to increase our purchase funds is to spend them and to prove that we have had to forgo some purchases. An increase in these funds and an increasing appreciation of the monetary value of our collections is the only way to prove that we need additional staff, storage space and equipment.

Bill Ely,
Clifton Park Museum,
Rotherham.

PEST CONTROL IN MUSEUMS : SURVEY

Martyn Linnie has contacted the Editor concerning his post-graduate research project on pest control in museums. Many of you will already have received the questionnaires and I hope that you can find time to complete and return them. If you have not received one write to:
M. Linnie, Dept of Zoology, Trinity College, Dublin 2, Ireland, for a free copy(ies).

Perhaps a good response may help us to take a step further towards a pest control strategy which is both effective and acceptable on health and safety grounds.