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Review: Annual Bibliography of the History of Natural History.
Volume 1
Publications of 1982. British Museum (Natural History) 1985
Price £8.00

This is the first volume of a publication which aims to provide a comprehensive record of literature relating to the history of natural history. It has evolved from a cataloguing system started some 30 years ago in the B.M.(N.H.) libraries to provide that Museum's taxonomists with information about bibliographical and historical papers published in a variety of journals, symposia and conference proceedings. It embraces the earth and life sciences, but excludes 'fringe' subjects such as forestry, biochemistry and speleology, unless they impinge on the descriptive areas of natural history.

Arrangement of the main list of publications is alphabetical by first author, and there are indexes to second and third authors, to persons (biographical studies), to institutions and to subjects. A list of journals cited is also included. The references cited in Volume 1 number 1369, ranging from an Anonymous 'Review of China's science and technology (1949-1979)', to Zuylen's 'The microscopes of Antoni van Leeuwenhock'. There can be little doubt that the Annual Bibliography is a most useful addition to the library shelves of the Museum Natural Historian. It may perhaps appear overpriced at £8 for a limp-covered 62 pages; however this is consistent with the B.M. (N.H.)'s inflated book prices. Any bibliography's real worth will be judged by the number of times it is consulted - I suspect for the Annual Bibliography it will be considerable. My copy is already dog-eared.

Peter Davis