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Biology Curators Group Newsletter

Title: Book Review: Controlling Vertebrate Pests in Museums

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Source: Nicol, A. (1991). Book Review: Controlling Vertebrate Pests in Museums. *Biology Curators Group Newsletter*, Vol 5 No 9, 104.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/1016>

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Controlling Museum Fungal Problems

T. J. K. Strang and J. E. Dawson

Technical Bulletin no 12. Canadian Conservation Institute, Ottawa. 1991. French and English.
ISBN 0-0662-54950-3

This short eight page booklet gives a basic introduction to fungi, and goes on to explain briefly the identification of fungal problems in museum organic materials, including outdoor wood. It emphasises the importance of the preventative measures described, but also gives an account of the possible chemical and non-chemical methods of control and the associated health hazards.

This publication is easy to read, covers the subject concisely and is essentially a good practical guide for museum curators of all disciplines.

Controlling Vertebrate Pests in Museums

T. J. K. Strang and J. E. Dawson

Technical Bulletin no 13. Canadian Conservation Institute, Ottawa. 1991. French and English.
ISBN 0-0662-54950-3

This nine page booklet covers the identification of vertebrate pest problems in museums in Canada. It advocates the common sense precaution of exclusion rather than extermination as the best method of control.

Whilst this publication gives some useful suggestions for the detection of rodent problems and for some of the methods of control, many of the vertebrate species described are not found in the UK. Also, it must be borne in mind that the legal situation regarding the use of poisons and the treatment of protected species (eg. bats and their roosts) is different in Canada compared to the UK.

Both of the above booklets are produced in Canada and may well be difficult to obtain in the UK at present. They can be ordered direct from the publishers at the following address: Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Department of Communications, 1030 Innes Road, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0C8

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News

Announcing a Systematics Priorities Initiative

The American Society of Plant Taxonomists, the Society of Systematic Biologists, and the Willi Hennig Society have formed a steering committee to organize an initiative to document research trends and priorities within systematics, to be called **Systematics Agenda 2000: Integrating Biological Diversity and Societal Needs**. **Systematics Agenda 2000** will have as its major themes the role of systematics in the analysis of biodiversity, the integrative role of systematics in comparative biology, and the importance of systematics in human affairs. The initiative is charged with (1) identifying important research trends and questions and with establishing priorities among them, (2) assessing the status of current infrastructures supporting systematics research and evaluating future needs, (3) documenting the broad role that systematics plays in human affairs and evaluating its future contributions and needs in those endeavours. **Systematics Agenda 2000** has established 28 committees to undertake this initiative.

A detailed description of **Systematics Agenda 2000**, including a list of the members of the Steering Committee and the co-chairs of all Standing Committees, can be found in the last issue (no. 4, 1991) of 'Cladistics, Systematic Botany, and Systematic Zoology'. All systematists, and nonsystematists interested in the role that systematics plays in their discipline, are invited to contact the appropriate committee co-chairs to discuss how each might contribute to this effort.

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