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Book review

CUI, J.Z., BAI, M., WU, H. & JI, L.Q. 2007: Catalogue of the Insect Type Specimens Deposited in China, Vol. 1. - Beijing: China Forestry Publishing House, 792 pp.

CUI, J.Z., BAI, M., FAN, R.J. & WU, H. 2009: Catalogue of the Insect Type Specimens Deposited in China, Vol. 2. - Beijing: China Forestry Publishing House, 752 pp.

China is a country with an exceptionally high diversity of insects and other groups of organisms. There are over 90 000 insect species recorded and the type specimens of about 30 000 of them are deposited in collections in the country. In the age of a drastic biodiversity crisis, which also threatens the fauna of China, the documentation of the present diversity must have high priority and cataloguing the type material is one very important aspect. It is very laudable that a crucial part of this laborious task was taken over by scientists of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, a leading research institution in this country.

The Catalogue is planned as a series of four volumes which will cover all available information on the type material deposited in collections in China. It will contain comprehensive data collected from original references, books and studies available until the publishing year. The first two volumes (ca. 20 000 species in total) were published in 2007 and 2009 in Chinese language (see above). They cover almost all species published in Chinese books or journals, such as Fauna Sinica (Vols. 1–31), province faunas, Acta Entomologica Sinica, Acta Zootaxonomica Sinica, Entomotaxonomia, Wuyi Science Journal, Zoological Bulletin, Zoological Research, Current Zoology, Scientia Silvae Sinicae, and all related journals of universities, etc. The third volume will be published in 2012 and will cover almost all species deposited in China, but published in non-Chinese books and journals. The fourth volume will come out in 2013. It will be an English version and combination of the first three volumes. This will make the information easily accessible for taxonomists and biodiversity researchers in other countries.

During my latest research stay at the Institute of Zoology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (March 2012) I had the opportunity to discuss intensively with the authors of the Catalogue, J.Z. Cui and M. Bai. Even though my access to the text in its original language is very limited and I am not a taxonomist in the strict sense, I was able to recognize the thorough treatment of all available sources of data and the high quality of these contributions. I am sure the Catalogue will turn out as a highly valuable source of information on the fauna of Hexapoda in a country with a spectacular and still insufficiently explored biodiversity.

R.G. BEUTEL

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Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

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