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Book Review: *Life Sciences Organizations and Agencies Directory*

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Book Review

Life Sciences Organizations and Agencies Directory. 1988. B.T. Darnay and M.L. Young, eds. Gale Research Co., Book Tower, Detroit, MI 48226 U.S.A., 864 pp. (ISBN 0-8103-1826-1). \$155.00.

This is a new directory of scientific organizations and related agencies from Gale Research, a publisher of several other directories of research facilities and other organizations. The present contribution covers both U.S. and foreign organizations, including virtually all nations. It complements the directories Gale Research has published on medical, technological, and earth sciences organizations.

The new directory will be of great interest to all biologists and researchers in the life sciences field, including the range of fields from agriculture to marine sciences, molecular biology, wildlife conservation, and environmental studies. It clearly is of great benefit to all users of research facilities around the world in terms of entomological research, including field labs, museums, and governmental organizations.

The listings are arranged in 18 chapters under such headings as "Associations—U.S.," "Botanic Gardens," "Research Centers—International," etc. Each listing gives the name of the organization, its current mailing address and telephone number, the name of the director of the organization, number of members (if appropriate), and its main purpose, holdings, activities, research publications, etc. Each listing is sequentially numbered and these reference numbers are then used in the comprehensive index in lieu of page numbers.

The compilation is impressive in its size and certainly will be useful, since so many organizations are listed. Advertising for the work notes nearly 8,000 listings, although actual listings amount to only 7,563 plus 99 agricultural officers at U.S. embassies.

Yet there are serious shortcomings to the work because of what is not listed. As with any compilation like this where 100 per cent inclusion is not attempted, one

finds strange omissions. It is not clear as to exactly why these omissions occur, however, since presumably some related directories of the publisher should have the missing listings, as for example the many missing field stations this author is aware of that are not listed in the work under review but which should be in the publisher's "International Research Centers Directory" (not available for comparison). Additionally, many missing organizations are clearly well-known, as for example museums in various countries that have substantial natural history collections and conduct research, not to mention the numerous smaller collections that a comprehensive compilation ought to list to be complete.

Examples of what this reviewer found omitted include the following:

- The Florida Entomological Society, with nearly 500 members (yet the Florida Mango Forum, with 260 members, was listed, as was the Florida Technical Advisory Committee on Citrus Canker, which is only a temporary group to find ways to eradicate citrus canker in Florida).
- The Florida State Museum (the major natural history museum in the southeastern U.S.).
- The Florida State Collection of Arthropods (the fifth largest entomological collection in the U.S.), as well as its parent Division of Plant Industry of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (yet several other state-run plant industry organizations were listed).
- The American Entomological Institute (the world's largest research center specializing in the parasitic Hymenoptera, with over one million specimens).
- The Essig Museum of Entomology at the University of California, Berkeley, (one of the largest insect collections on the West Coast, yet the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at Berkeley was listed).
- Calaway Gardens, Georgia (the major botanical garden in the southern states).

- The National Geographic Society (which fosters a great deal of research and which publishes the "National Geographic Magazine," circulation 10 million, yet the American Museum of Natural History was listed as an association publishing "Natural History" magazine, with a circulation of 508,000).

Internationally, the following omissions were noted:

- The British Museum (Natural History), London (probably the largest natural history research facility in the world!). The Museo de Historia Natural, Lima, Peru.
- The Wau Ecology Institute, Papua New Guinea (probably the main field station in New Guinea).
- The Humboldt Museum, Berlin, East Germany (one of the major European natural history museums).
- The major natural history museums in West Germany like those of Munich, Karlsruhe, and Bonn (only the Senckenburg Museum, Frankfurt, was listed).
- The Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris (one of the largest research museums in the world).
- The Museum of Natural History G. Antipa, Bucharest, Romania (the main taxonomic research center in Romania). No listing at all for Trinidad, yet with one of the major field stations at Arima.

One could go on and on, and others would surely find many more omissions. One can but wonder how a comprehensive work can omit the British Museum.

Nonetheless, the work has great usefulness for those organizations which are listed, many of which will surely surprise users in terms of what is present in many areas. One must only remember that many facilities are indeed not listed. One hopes that future editions will try to be comprehensive and actually list all life sciences facilities worldwide. It appears the editors put together a hasty compilation, started only in 1986, rather than a truly comprehensive directory.

The directory is advertised at a price of \$155.00, which is in the range of what similar directories cost. It ought to be made available at all research facilities where researchers need to find addresses and information on what facilities are available in various parts of the world.

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