

Book review

The collection and preservation of animal parasites.

By M.H. Pritchard & G.O. Kruse. 1982. 141 pp. (Technical Bulletin, 1). The Harold W. Manter Laboratory, University of Nebraska Press.

The aim of this book is to provide a 'general guide for non-specialists who wish to collect and preserve animal parasites that are worth studying'. It is not the authors' intent that it should be regarded as a handbook nor does it set out to include every technique relevant to the field of parasitology.

The contents of the book are divided under ten headings. These include a checklist of materials needed to collect parasites and a section on hosts stressing the importance of identifying the host, how to preserve the host animal if it cannot be examined straight away, the order of examining the host's tissues and the procedure for examining each organ. This is followed by an important section on the preservation of parasite specimens giving details of relaxing, killing, fixing, labelling and packaging of specimens. The remaining sections deal with the preparation of the specimens for examination and their microscopic examination. Procedures for staining and measuring are included. An important chapter is devoted to special requirements for the

preparation of individual parasite groups, i.e., Protozoa and Metazoa, Monogenea, Digenea and Aspidogastrea, Cestoda, Acanthocephala, Nematoda, leeches, Arthropoda and Mollusca (retrieval of larvae).

The text is illustrated where necessary with line diagrams and plenty of space is provided in each section for the users own notes and comments. The book is practical in design with spiral wire binding so that it stays open flat on the laboratory bench and is printed on fairly stout paper for constant handling. Its cover, although initially grey, has exhibited chamaeleon-like qualities, turning to a shade of turquoise where it has been exposed to the sun on my laboratory bench.

This volume might be criticized for its poor quality type and the way in which the main headings of each section blend into the text. However, I would recommend this book to any one actively involved in the practical side of parasitology as it is definitely a volume for the laboratory rather than the library shelf. It achieves what its authors intended: an inexpensively priced guide to collectors or potential collectors of animal parasites.

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