



Type specimens of amphibians in the National Museum of Natural History, Leiden, The Netherlands

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Abstract

The amphibian type specimens held in the National Museum of Natural History in Leiden are listed. A total of 775 type specimens representing 143 taxon names were encountered. The list provides the original name, the original publication date, pagination and illustrations, current name, type locality and notes on the type status.

Key words: Amphibia, Caudata, Anura, Gymnophiona, types, National Museum of Natural History, Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie

Introduction

The National Museum of Natural History “Naturalis” in Leiden (until 1988 known as *Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie*, RMNH) was established in 1820 when three pre-existing collections were merged: the *Cabinet du Roi* of Louis Napoleon (or *'s Lands Kabinet van Natuurlijke Historie*), the private collection owned by C. J. Temminck and the collection of the University of Leiden, also known as the *Academic Cabinet*. Coenraad Jacob Temminck, ornithologist and founder of the museum, was then appointed director, and continued in that post until his death in 1858. The history of these early collections is described in *The history of Natural History in Leiden* (Van der Laan, 2001).

The collection of amphibians in the RMNH goes largely back to the 19th century. The herpetological collection includes material from South East Asia and the Amazonian region, as well as several valuable collections from other localities. The oldest Asian material dates from the 1820s, and it was gathered by the members of the *Natuurkundige Commissie*, a group of naturalists sent to the Dutch East Indies to study and collect animals and plants for the museum. The first expedition began in July 1820. H. Kuhl, J. C. van Hasselt, both naturalists, together with J. Keultjes, artist, and G. van Raalten, taxidermist, arrived at Java and started the exploration from their basis in Buitenzorg (now Bogor). Unfortunately, they all died shortly after arrival. Kuhl and Keultjes died of tropical diseases after nine months and Van Hasselt in 1823. Replacement was sent in 1825: the zoologists H. Boie and H. Macklot, the taxidermist S. Müller and the artist P. Van Oort. Of this group, only Müller would return to Holland, after twelve years in East India. Boie died shortly after his arrival, in 1827, and so did Macklot, who died in 1832 after a fight with Chinese rebels. The *Natuurkundige Commissie* explored most of Java and part of Sumatra, Sulawesi and Papua. After Macklot's death, other zoologists, botanists and artists were sent to Java. Most of them felt victim of fatal disease and few of them