



<http://dx.doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.3736.5.9>

<http://zoobank.org/urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:0F956AED-3055-4711-B64B-1C9747529390>

The mammal type specimens at the Natural History Museum, University of Oslo, Norway

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Abstract

A catalog of mammalian type specimens in the collections of Natural History Museum, University of Oslo, Norway, is presented. All type specimens in the Museum's mammal collection were revisited and the respective label information was compared with the data provided in the original descriptions. Most taxa were described from type series with no specimen particularly assigned to holotype. The compiled catalog of the type specimens is not intended as a taxonomic revision of the respective taxa, which is why we have not designated lectotypes from the collection's type series. Specimens that were clearly marked as “the type” in the original description were considered holotypes. The catalog consists of 19 taxa, with the year of authority corrected for three taxa.

Key words: mammal types, Natural History Museum Oslo Norway, NHMO

Introduction

The International Commission for Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) states in article 72.10 of the fourth edition of the Code (ICZN 1999): “Holotypes, syntypes, lectotypes, and neotypes are the bearers of the scientific names of all animal taxa. They are the international standards of reference that provide objectivity in zoological nomenclature. They are held in trust for science by all zoologists and by the persons responsible for their safe keeping”. Recommendation 72F emphasizes: “Every institution in which name-bearing types are deposited should publish lists of name-bearing types in its possession or custody”.

In accordance with the recommendations for the Code, it is our goal to give an account of all the specimens that have been classified as types from the collection of mammals in the Natural History Museum, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway (NHM).

Most mammalian specimens described here were collected when the capital of Norway, Oslo, was known as the city of Christiania (1624–1925). The Natural Museum was established in 1813; the Zoological Museum was located in the city center of Christiania. In 1910, the Zoological Museum was opened in a new building in the Botanical Garden at Tøyen, a neighborhood slightly outside the city center. The Zoological Museum had the status of an institute under the Faculty for Mathematics and Sciences of the University of Oslo until 1999 when it was merged with the Geological Museum, Botanical Museum, and Botanical Garden into the Natural History Museum, University of Oslo (NHM). In connection with the 200th anniversary of the University of Oslo in 2011, the Zoological Museum was named “Robert Collett's House” in honor of Robert Collett, a famous Norwegian zoologist, curator, director and professor at the Zoological Museum.

Robert Collett (1842–1913) started his scientific career as a scientific assistant of Professor Halvor H. Rasch in 1871. In 1874, he became curator at the Zoological Museum, and was appointed professor at the same institution in 1885. Collett was the director of the Zoological Museum from 1882 until he passed away in 1913. He contributed considerably to extending the Museum's collection of vertebrates and was pivotal in organizing Norwegian expeditions to Africa, Australia, and Borneo aiming at collecting animals for the Christiania-based Zoological Museum. Ten of the 19 mammalian taxa that are represented with type specimens from the NHM collections were described by Collett (Table 1).

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