

## Databases

## Mollusca collections

**A catalogue of the Irish and British marine Mollusca in the collections of the National Museum of Ireland ~ Natural History (1835-2005)**



The catalogue website, at [www.habitas.org.uk/nmi\\_catalogue](http://www.habitas.org.uk/nmi_catalogue).

By J.D. Nunn & J.M.C. Holmes

FOR MORE THAN 70 years (since 1924 when A.R. Nichols retired as keeper), little curatorial work had been carried out on the Irish and British marine molluscan collections of the National Museum of Ireland, apart from a systematic list of the material stored in alcohol, prepared by author Holmes in 1981.

These collections comprise important type and cited specimens; species new to both Britain and Ireland; voucher material from the original Clare Island Survey 1909-1911 and the new Clare Island Survey 1991-1995; material from many 19th-century and Fisheries cruises around Ireland; material from extensive modern surveys such as the BioMar survey 1993-1996; together with local collections by leading conchologists and marine biologists (including G.W. Chaster, N. Colgan, G.P. Farran, J.A. Kitching, M. Long, J.T. Marshall,

A. Massy, D. McGrath, N.F. McMillan, D. Minchin, A.R. Nichols, R.L. Praeger, E. Waller, A. Warren and R. Welch).

In 1995, a collaborative project between the Ulster Museum (Belfast) and the National Museum of Ireland (Dublin) was begun to catalogue the collections and to make this information available to all through publication. With the limited time available (16 days per annum), documentation was largely complete by 2000. In subsequent years, this information was transferred to a suitable electronic format.

The Catalogue of Marine Mollusca website provides a way of accessing information about the collections of Irish and British marine Mollusca held by the National Museum of Ireland. A short history of the collections is provided, together with relevant entries into the Museum Register and a list of references to cited material. An archive of the specimen data allows a search of all specimen entries. Each specimen entry includes the taxon (family,

genus, species); number of specimens; identification status; storage medium; record details, where available from label (may include location; date; name of collector/determiner; habitat; method of collection; name of survey ship; published reference; comments); collection name; registration number; donor.

There are currently 7,055 entries on the website, from an estimated total of 9,000 specimen lots. The remaining records will be entered into the search archive as time allows.

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## Carlo Heip honoured at MANUELA kick-off meeting

During dinner at the kick-off meeting of the MarBEF RMP MANUELA consortium in Ghent, Belgium, in September 2005, the MarBEF General Coordinator Carlo Heip was honoured for his pioneering efforts in meiobenthic research in Europe and worldwide.

At the beginning of his career, Carlo Heip's main field of interest was the ecology and population dynamics of brackish-water harpacticoid copepods. Later on, he was the author of a standard work on marine nematodes (*The ecology of marine nematodes, Oceanogr Mar Biol Ann Rev* 23:399-489). His enthusiasm for marine meiobenthic research stimulated many young scientists to start their research in the field of meiobenthology.



Carlo Heip being honoured at the Manuela kick-off meeting. Note the appropriate choice of wine.