

Worms are the topic of book by faculty members

What are typically segmented, bilaterally symmetrical, hermaphroditic, directly-developing annelids with a spacious coelom, a preoral protomium, an anterior ventral mouth, a posterior anus, and a relatively small number of setae?

Worms. In fact, they are a group of terrestrial and aquatic worms known scientifically as the oligochaetes and known in one of their more common manifestations as earthworms. They are also the subject of a unique catalogue, more than 20 years in the making, about to be published by the University of New Brunswick.

Nomenclatura Oligochaetologica: A Catalogue of Names,

Descriptions and Type Specimens of Oligochaeta by John W. Reynolds and David G. Cook is scheduled to appear this fall. The book is currently being printed at the Runge Press in Ottawa, with the financial support of its publisher - UNB - and the National Research Council.

According to senior author John Reynolds of UNB's faculty of forestry, "There has never been anything like this book before, for plant or animal. It accounts for every name that's ever been used to describe oligochaetes."

The purpose of the catalogue, stated by the authors in their introductory remarks, "is to... provide systematists, and other workers with an interest in the

Oligochaeta, with a basic tool to facilitate their research."

The intrinsic complexity of oligochaete taxonomy, combined with "difficulties arising from historical factors," has impeded research in the past, the authors contend.

There has been such confusion and variation in the names used for various oligochaete types that researchers have been unable "to name their animals with confidence."

In their catalogue, Reynolds and Cook attempt to eliminate some of the "historical difficulties" hampering oligochaete research. They avoid taxonomic quibbles by discarding "all systematic or evolutionary systems" and follow-

ing a strictly alphabetical format.

In addition to alphabetically cataloguing "generic, specific, subspecific and varietal names," they provide other information critical to type identification. Each entry is accompanied by "citations to their original descriptions, an historical record of the generic disposition of species, and the location or fate of their type specimens wherever known."

The catalogue contains 6,326 entries - 573 in the Nomenclator Generum section and 5,753 in the Nomenclator Specierum.

The authors believe Nomenclatura Oligochaetologica will prove useful to anyone with "a nomenclatural problem involving the Oligochaeta." Its references to

original citations and type descriptions will facilitate systematic taxonomic revisions, and because it brings together in one volume "a list of names already used and therefore occupied, invalid or unavailable, their index will also "be of great assistance to those describing new species or genera."

The book is intended not only for oligochaete specialists but for a whole range of biologists in allied fields.

"Agriculturalists, acuculturalists, ecologists, environmental biologists, ethologists, physiologists, phylogeneticists, soil zoologists and zoogeographers, to mention a few, are among our potential readers," the authors declare.

To make their catalogue more readily accessible to the non-specialist, Reynolds and Cook include an introductory review of the biological features of the oligochaetes and a brief survey of the work of major oligochaete taxonomists. They also provide full instructions on how to use the index.

The authors present their introductory and explanatory remarks in six languages - English, French, German, Portuguese, Chinese and Russian.

Nomenclatura Oligochaetologica began in the 1950's with the work of G.E. Gates of Bangor, Maine, who set about compiling a card index of oligochaete types and the institutions where they were located.

In 1972 Gates turned over his card file to Reynolds. Shortly afterwards, Reynolds began visiting museums and collections on several continents to collect data on oligochaeta types. These visits gave him the idea of including, where possible, the location of museum specimens for each entry of the catalogue. He also decided to add in chronological order the sequence of genera in which each entry had been placed.

Finding the "diversity and extent of the Oligochaeta today ... too large for one investigator to handle adequately," Reynolds invited aquatic oligochaete specialist David Cook of Environment Canada Fisheries and Marine Service, Ottawa, to join the project in 1974. Reynolds specializes in terrestrial oligochaetes.

The authors completed their manuscript last April. When published, the catalogue will be sold to scientists, libraries and other interested individuals and institutions through the UNB bookstore.

Reynolds and Cook plan to publish supplements to the original volume every five to ten years.

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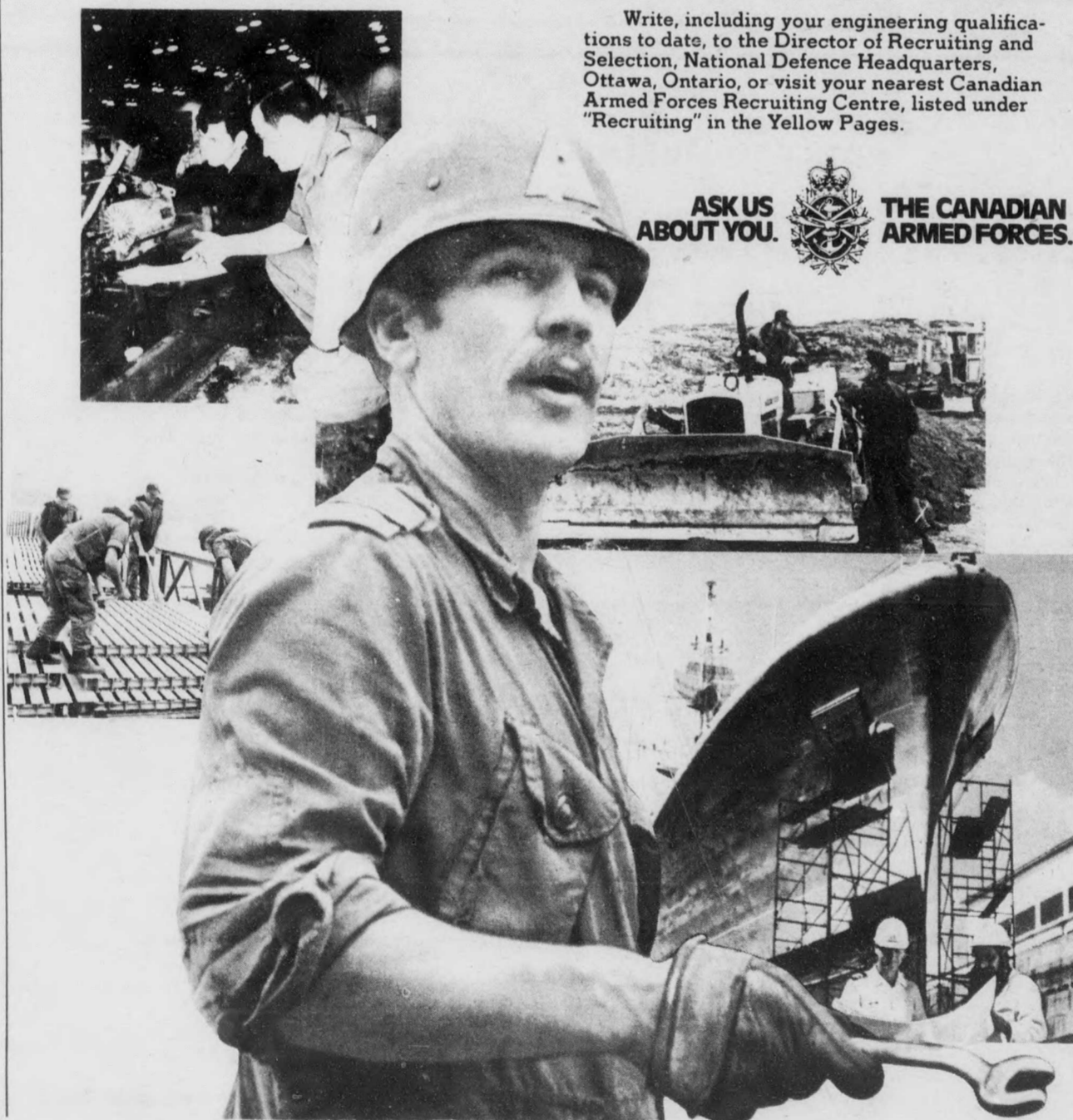
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Pub tonight

Aquafuge will play for a pub sponsored by the SRC in the SUB ballroom tonight.

Campus ministry announces hours

Mary Lou McGibbon will be in the Campus Ministry Office Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in room 33 of the Student Union Building.

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Felicitations to Ph... blind horse, Mary.