



Echinoderm conferences and symposia: a concise history and bibliography

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Abstract

For fifty years, the community of echinoderm researchers has held meetings, symposia, conferences, and workshops dealing with their primary objects of research, that is sea stars, sea urchins, and allies. Over the years, a bewildering amount of literature has been published in the course of these gatherings, making it sometimes difficult for the echinoderm novice to see the woods for the trees. In order to facilitate future historic and bibliographic research, we provide a concise summary of echinoderm meetings from 1963 to 2012, together with a detailed list of publications related to these events. This list includes conference proceedings and abstracts compilations complete with ISBN or ISSN numbers. The historical background of several echinoderm conferences is described, and we present information about lesser-known meetings, held for example in the Soviet Union, France, or Japan. In addition, an overview of the evolution of echinoderm conference logos is provided. Finally, we briefly discuss the future of echinoderm conferences and their proceedings.

Key words: Echinodermata, IEC, ECE, bibliography, history of science

Introduction

Since the first symposium dedicated specifically to echinoderms in 1963, members of the echinoderm community have come together to discuss matters related to their favourite group of organisms, the marine spiny-skinned animals (Deuterostomia: Echinodermata). As anyone working in this field will have experienced, a considerable amount of our knowledge of echinoderms has been published in conference proceedings or as collected abstracts. According to John M. Lawrence (pers. comm.), the publication of conference proceedings from independent symposia as well as national and international conference series has resulted in a “central, large compilation of echinoderm literature that in turn has led to an increase in research on echinoderms in the second half of the 20th century” (see David *et al.* 2010 for statistics).

Unfortunately, this wealth of valuable information is usually not available online and must be retrieved by more traditional ways, that is by searching libraries and flipping through thousands of pages. Having gone through this arduous process ourselves many times, we decided that it would have made life considerably easier had we known before which conferences and meetings had actually resulted