

A Catalogue of the Non-fossil Amphibian and Reptile Type Specimens in the Collection of the Australian Museum: Types Currently, Previously and Purportedly Present

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ABSTRACT. Full registration data for all identifiable non-fossil primary and secondary type specimens of reptiles and amphibians currently or previously in the Australian Museum are presented, and the current status and registration history of these specimens described, together with any discrepancies between these data and those published in original descriptions. The current identity of the taxa represented by these types is given, together with reference to the original proposer of synonymies and new combinations. Some new synonymies, particularly involving species described by R.W. Wells and C.R. Wellington, are proposed.

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Several changes to the herpetological collections of the Australian Museum have prompted us to prepare this second, updated catalogue of the amphibian and reptile type specimens, though following only 20 years after the first herpetological type catalogue for the collection (Cogger, 1979).

Firstly, a large number of species have been described since 1979, with a correspondingly large number of primary and secondary types deposited in the collection. Amongst these have been the numerous holotypes and lectotypes resulting from two contentious works by Wells & Wellington (1984, 1985). These two works have been the subject of much criticism (Gans, 1985; Grigg and

Shine, 1985; King & Miller, 1985; Tyler, 1985; Cogger, 1986; Shea, 1987a; King, 1988; Ingram & Covacevich, 1989; Underwood & Stimson, 1990; Hutchinson & Donnellan, 1992), culminating in an application to the International Commission for Zoological Nomenclature to suppress both works for the purposes of nomenclature (President, Australian Society of Herpetologists, 1987). The Commission recently declined to suppress either work (Anon., 1991) on the basis that the arguments opposing suppression were strong, that the problems arising from the work were mostly taxonomic rather than nomenclatural, that confusion would not be eliminated by suppression of the works, and that stability of