

Chapter 39

MAINZ: Paleontological Collections of the University of Mainz (Geoscientific Collections)



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39.1 Historical Background

The Institute of Geosciences (University of Mainz) hosts several paleontological collections which are widely used for teaching and research purposes. Soon after the reopening of the University in the winter of 1946/47, the *Geologisch-Paläontologisches Institut* (Geological and Paleontological Institute) was established. At that time, no geoscientific collections existed at the institute. Most of the objects in today's collections were obtained during student field trips or during designated excavations organized by the Institute.

The founder of the paleontological collections, Univ.-Prof. Dr. Heinz Tobien, worked at the Institute from 1955 until 1978 (Falke et al. 1977). With a minimum of staff and financial resources, he established the Institute of Paleontology which today is one of eleven research groups of the Institute of Geosciences. During his time at the University of Mainz, Heinz Tobien continued to excavate the Höwenegg fossil site. In addition, a wealth of fossil material was obtained from western and southern Europe, Anatolia and Iran. Fossil material from the Rhine-Main area such as Messel, Mosbach and the Mainz Basin complemented the paleontological collections. They were further expanded with specimens from the Devonian and Permian by Tobien's successors, namely Univ.-Profs. Drs. Karlheinz Rothausen, Jürgen Boy, Dietrich Berg and Norbert Schmidt-Kittler. As such the paleontological collections

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