



Division of Paleontology Special Cases in Labeling Fossil Specimens

1) Acid Prepared Specimens

There are three main categories of acid-prepared specimens:

- One piece, One specimen.
- Part and Counterpart, where only the better part is acid prepared.
- Part and Counterpart, where both halves are prepared.
- Many smaller specimens on one block of matrix (rare).

Before preparation, the specimen number should be written on the side with bone showing. This will be preserved when the specimen is encased in resin. Also etch the number in the resin, immediately after the resin is poured and set, not after the first acid treatment

After the specimen emerges from its acid treatment and new bone is exposed, find a place on the resin, and either write the number on a roughened surface, or engrave the number into the resin with a Dremel tool bit. Refresh the etching as needed during extended multiple acid treatments and handling.

2) Specimen Lots

In some cases, for example in the fossil invertebrate collection and certain vertebrate specimens (e.g., shark teeth), specimens may be cataloged in lots, with multiple specimens of the same taxon assigned to one specimen number. If any single specimen is pulled out for a loan, or to be cited in a paper, it is given its own unique catalog number. The original catalog number for the lot should be cited on the new catalog card in the "description" or "notes" field.

3) Multiple Specimens in the Same Block

If there is more than one specimen on a block, each one should be given a unique catalog number. It is not always necessary to catalog all specimens in the block, but each cited or figured specimens should be given a new number. The fact that the specimens are located on the same block should be noted on the catalog card for each specimen (e.g., "on same block as catalogue # xxxxx")

4) Applying catalogue number labels

Cut out the catalogue number tag.

Use waterproof adhesive to attach the number tag to the matrix or to an inconspicuous area on the specimen.

If there is no matrix, if the specimen is fragile or if any morphologic feature will be covered by the number tag, do not attach the tag; rather, place the tag and the specimen in a closed container (plastic or cardboard box, glass vial, etc.).

If there are many (over 5) specimens in a lot, then attach several numbers to specimens and place the numbered and unnumbered specimens and one loose number tag in a closed container.