

## Book reviews

*Gmelin Handbook of Inorganic and Organometallic Chemistry, Eighth Edition, Osmium, Organoosmium Compounds, Volume 4a*, xi + 178 pp., Springer, Berlin and Heidelberg, 1995, DM1100, öS8300, sFr957, ISBN 3-540-93723-4

This volume continues the Gmelin epic. Whether the Institute can keep pace with the evolution of chemical science must be a matter for conjecture, but in the meantime this invaluable resource continues to grow. The treatment of Os<sub>3</sub> species will span volumes B2 to B7. This volume really deals with a part topic, since some Os<sub>3</sub> carbonyls containing additional nitrogen-bonded ligands were described in volume B3. That topic is concluded here, but the contents also include compounds with phosphorus-bonded ligands. These compounds contain six, seven, or eight carbonyl groups, and the rest spill over into Vol. 4b. It is not clear what determined where the break between volumes is placed. This is not particularly large, and is therefore not unusually expensive. The cost per page is about DM6.18, which is not much more than the page cost of volumes published within the last years.

The presentation is, as ever, immaculate, with convenient tabulations, lots of structural diagrams, and extensive indices. It follows the traditional pattern. Literature coverage is complete up to mid-1994. It will be an invaluable reference to workers in the field. Whether the field is large enough to support such a luxury product is another question.

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*Gmelin Handbook of Inorganic and Organometallic Chemistry, Eighth Edition, Molybdenum, Organomolybdenum Compounds, Part 10*, Springer,

Berlin and Heidelberg, 1995, pp. xii + 296, DM1800, öS13,140, sFr1566, ISBN 3-540-93724-2

This volume continues the description of compounds containing the fragment (C<sub>5</sub>H<sub>5</sub>)Mo(CO)<sub>3</sub>, one of the more common moieties in organomolybdenum chemistry. It covers compounds with bonds between molybdenum and Main Group elements, and with bonds between molybdenum and transition elements. The literature is covered until the end of 1993, and the page cost is just over DM<sup>6</sup>, which must be good value for money.

The reader will find few surprises. Indeed that is one of the strengths of the Gmelin series, everything in its place and a place for everything. The discipline involved in preparing these volumes can only be admired. I could not exert it myself, but continue to be pleased that there are those who can! I can only repeat what I have often written before. The arrangement with an empirical formula index, a detailed contents list, and tabulated preparative and spectral data make the search for data on specific compounds very straightforward. The emphasis on structure rather than reaction produces limitations, but since the literature coverage is complete, such information can be extracted with a minimal amount of effort.

This is the chemical equivalent of the Encyclopedia Britannica. Gmelin might consider printing a detailed guide in each new volume, because the division into volumes now seems to be governed by considerations other than chemical. There are to be at least 12 volumes on molybdenum, and the organomolybdenum series from 5 through to 12 is nearly complete. I cannot think that we shall see a ninth edition, at least, not in conventional book form.

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