Gmelin Handbook of Inorganic and Organometallic Chemistry, 8th Edn., Sn Organotin Compounds, Part 20
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This volume (compiled by H. Schumann and I. Schumann) is the latest in the series on organotin compounds that began in 1975. It deals with compounds containing bonds between tin and elements of the Main Groups I–IV. (In fact it is subtitled, a little confusingly, as being devoted to compounds between tin and Main Group IV to Main Group I elements, and the Main Group elements are, indeed, dealt with in that 'reverse' order.) The tin atom bears at least one organic group bonded through carbon, but there is otherwise no restriction on the range of the other groups on tin or that of the groups on the other Main Group element.

There are 20 pages devoted to compounds with tin bonded to Si, and the corresponding figures for the other elements are: Ge, 20; Pb, 4; B, 19; Al, 2; Ga, 0.5; In, 2; Tl, 0.5; Mg, 4; Ca, 2; Li, 53; Na, 27; K, 35; Cs, 0.5;

The account has been prepared with the thoroughness we expect for Gmelin volumes, and literature coverage is complete up to the end of 1991, with a few more recent references added. As is usual in this particular series, the volume starts with a list of recent general accounts, monographs, and reviews (in this case those published in 1990–1991) dealing with organotin compounds, not only with the chemical and physical properties but also with analysis and environmental aspects and toxicology and biological applications. That this list is 16 pages long is an indication of the high level of activity in the field.

Because the accuracy of Gmelin volumes is legendary I have derived some perverse satisfaction from detecting several minor spelling errors in this one. For example, the name of T.R. Spalding is given throughout as T.R. Spalting, puzzlingly in view of the fact that it appears in a substantial number of different references spread throughout the book.

It occurs to me that the ease of typesetting and of reading would be increased if Gmelin could bring itself to use the standard abbreviations for the very common organic ligands, such as Me, Bu^t and Ph, throughout the text, as it does in listing ions in the mass spectra.

The series on organotin compounds is becoming increasingly valuable as the range of compound types covered nears completion. This addition to it can be unhesitatingly recommended.

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