

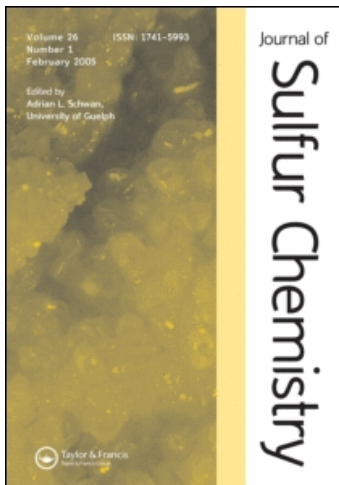
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A Review of: "Houben-Weyl, Methoden der Organischen Chemie, Vierte Auflage, Erweiterungs-und Folgebände. J. Falbe (Ed.), E5, Carbonsäuren und Carbonsäurederivate, Thieme, Stuttgart, 1985. LIV 1817 pp. (in 2 parts). DM 1880 (subscription price DM 1692)."

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BOOK REVIEW

Houben-Weyl, Methoden der Organischen Chemie, Vierte Auflage, Erweiterungs- und Folgebände. J. Falbe (Ed.), E5, Carbonsäuren und Carbonsäurederivate, Thieme, Stuttgart, 1985. LIV + 1817 pp. (in 2 parts). DM 1880 (subscription price DM 1692).

As every chemist who can read and write knows every volume of the legendary *Houben-Weyl* series is a piece of equipment in the category that one must buy, borrow, or steal and the present volume is no exception.

It deals with the following subjects of special interest to sulfur chemists:

- Sulfur-containing orthocarboxylic acid derivatives (by G. Simchen)
- Thiocarboxylic acid halides (by R. Mayer and S. Scheithauer)
- Thiocarboxylic acid *O*-esters (by R. Mayer and S. Scheithauer)
- Thiocarboxylic acids (by W. Bauer and K. Kühlein)
- Thiocarboxylic acid *S*-esters (by W. Bauer and K. Kühlein)
- Dithiocarboxylic acids and derivatives (by R. Mayer and S. Scheithauer)
- Thiocarboxylic acid imino *S*-esters (by W. Bauer and K. Kühlein)
- Thiocarboxylic acid amides and derivatives (by W. Bauer and K. Kühlein)

It should be noted that the original organization of the *Houben-Weyl* which kept virtually all sulfur compounds in a separate volume has now been changed so that many sulfur compounds are treated together with their oxygen analogs.

The literature has been covered through the first half of 1984 which makes this volume delightfully up to date. As a new feature bold-face type is used in the structural formulas to emphasize salient partial structures.

The organization of the table of contents is baffling. Part 1 contains both a summary and a detailed table of contents for Part 1 and Part 2 while Part 2 contains a supercondensed table of contents of, lo and behold, Part 1. By the same token there is no subject index in Part 1, the subject index for the whole volume having been placed in Part 2. The subject index plays hide and seek with the reader by an odd mix of systematic and trivial nomenclature (Acrylthiosäure, Acryldithiosäure, etc.) laced with inconsistencies (Malon-1-thiosäure vs. Thioessigsäure and Thiobenzoessäure; Oxalithiosäure and Oxaldithiosäure vs. Tetrathiooxalsäure; 1,2-Benzooxazol vs. 1,3-Benzoxazol; etc.). A remarkable number of misprints are teasing the user of the index such as 1,2,4-Dithiazole (p. 1760) instead of 1,2,4-Thiadiazol, Oxo (p. 1964) instead of Oxan, Piridazin (p. 1769) instead of Pyridazin, 1-Oxa-cyclononadecan (p. 1772) instead of 1-Oxacyclononadecan, Allothreonin (p. 1800) instead of Allothreonin, Englinton-Methode (p. 1808) instead of Eglinton-Methode, Erlenmeyer-Frühstück-Synthese (p. 1808) instead of Erlenmeyer-Frústück-Synthese, Horner-Wiltig-Reaktion (p. 1809) instead of Horner-Wittig-Reaktion, Hüning-Verfahren (p. 1809) instead of Hünig-Verfahren, Ramberg-Backlund-Umlagerung (p. 1814) instead of Ramberg-Bäcklund-Umlagerung, and Thiacylium-Ionen (pp. 917 and 1815) instead of Thioacylium-Ionen.

The index entry "Nitriloxid" is puzzling. Nitrile *N*-oxides are treated under this chapter heading on pp. 1591–1610, but the index entry only refers to one single of several methods of preparation on pp. 1591–1592 without the alibi of mentioning a specific compound.

This reviewer deplores the lack of an author index, an omission which can hardly amount to significant savings.

The lively and uncrowded typography, the liberal use of structural formulas and tables, and the frequent direct presentation of synthetic procedures vouch for easy and convenient use both by the casual reader and the detail-seeking specialist. Occasional attempts to include spectral data are less convincing and less well-organized than the presentation of the *Houben-Weyl* bread-and-butter synthetic lore. The present volume is an indispensable source of inspiration and information for synthetic chemists which even readers with a limited knowledge of German will find easy to use.

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