

Preface

to this excerpt of the DMPN

The *Dictionary of Minor Planet Names* (DMPN)⁽¹⁾ was first published in 1991, elucidating the meaning of the named and numbered minor planets. Consecutively, five further editions and four addenda of this monograph followed in roughly three-year intervals 1993, 1996, 1999, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2018 in accord with the time of IAU General Assemblies. According to a resolution of IAU Division III of the 2000 Manchester General Assembly DMPN attained the status of an official IAU publication. The *Addendum 2015 – 2017* to the 6th edition only updated a fascinating story of a rather breathtaking evolution and completes our common effort in more than a quarter of a century.

Starting from rather low numbers of numbered and named minor planets we experienced an overwhelming accumulation which is summarized in the following table. These figures demonstrate that the count of numbered objects has been multiplied by more than a factor of 100 during the last 26 years! The evolution of the count of new names, however, retarded by a factor of not even 5.5. The extremely dropped down percentage of named planets should stimulate all discoverers of already numbered minor planets to propose new names in order to produce a much larger portion of unique number/name combinations which exclude any errors in the literature.

The complete work is a thoroughly revised data collection and every effort has been made to check and/or correct all information again. It goes without saying that the fundamental structure of DMPN has been left unchanged. As a matter of fact we always are in need of information concerning, for example, life data and/or explanation of name initials. Our colleagues are kindly asked for their support.

A publication like DMPN needs the support and encouragement of many persons. The kind support by the IAU General Secretaries is highly appreciated. We thank Gareth V. Williams, retired Associate Director of the Minor Planet Center for his helpful piece of advice.

In October 2016 Lutz D. Schmadel passed away after some months of illness.

Being involved in the DMPN from the beginning, the complete task to prepare further editions and addenda has been taken over by me since then.

In June 2020 the Minor Planet Center (MPC) published new numberings and new namings of Minor Planets. With these, now there are 546 077 numbered and – of these – 22 129 named Minor Planets including Dwarf Planets. The above mentioned figures of the counts of numbering and naming are now multiplied by the factor of 110 for the numbering and 5.6 for the naming in the past 29 years.

Ed.	Time	numbered	named	percentage	
1	Dec. 1991	5 012	3 957	79.0	
2	Sep. 1993	5 655	4 512	79.8	
3	June 1996	7 041	5 252	74.6	
4	May 1999	10 666	6 730	63.1	
5	Dec. 2002	52 224	10 038	19.2	
5-A1	Dec. 2005	120 437	12 804	10.6	
5-A2	Dec. 2008	207 942	15 056	7.2	
6	Dec. 2011	310 376	16 863	5.4	
6-A1	Jan. 2015	422 636	19 044	4.5	
6-A2	Dec. 2017	508 765	21 191	4.2	
	Aug. 2020	546 077	22 129	4.1	this excerpt

In the “Wissenschaftsatlas der Universität Heidelberg”⁽²⁾ on the occasion of the university’s 625 year anniversary in 2011 a list of 97 Minor Planet Names was published. Their names exhibit some kind of a tie to Heidelberg.

There exist other compilations of this kind, e.g. two publications “Kleine Planeten, deren Namen einen Österreichbezug aufweisen” (“Minor Planets Whose Names Show a Connection to Austria”)^(3,4) in which 197 and 175 names are given.

In this present publication we present an update to the list in the “Wissenschaftsatlas”. We now have found 169 Minor Planets with names bearing some kind of a tie to Heidelberg. We merely present the citations published in the MPC in the format of the DMPN.

Heidelberg, September 2020

Gernot Burkhardt

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