

to the editor

Stonehenge Again

Sir: Once again you have reported facets about the Stonehenge controversy (SN: 11/4), and once again you have quoted scientific hypotheses which have tempted my inquisitive nature. The archaeologists' disagreement with the astronomical theories (on the assumption that Stone Age man lacked the sophistication to figure out such a complex observatory) truly amuses me. I, for one, would like to see the "scientific" evidence for this hypothesis that Stone Age man was, indeed, such a clod. Society today has been conditioned to accept this conclusion to such an extent, that even our sagacious archaeologists try to illuminate their understanding of the dim past with this brilliant foreknowledge that civilized man is a recent phenomenon.

The hypothesis that the Stonehenge was first conceived by a "Stone Age Albert Einstein" substantiates my suspicion that some scientists leave no room for doubt about the average Stone Age man's intelligence. Such narrow-mindedness on the part of these archaeologists and others is inexcusable! Why is it that most hypotheses (about the possibility of intelligent prehistoric civilizations) are disregarded, even ridiculed? Why is it that unexplainable archaeological discoveries such as Britain's Stonehenge, the Uxmal Temple in Yucatan, the Xochicalo Pyramid in Mexico, the Great Stone Remains of the Pacific Island, and others are usually attributed by archaeologists to pagan clods?

I think it is about time that intelligent men investigate the possibility of much older, yet as intelligent as, the early Egyptian cultures. This, of course, would mean that scientists would have to tentatively accept the possibility of intelligent civilizations existing at the time of some of the glacial advances. This, of course, is absurd! . . . or is it . . . ?

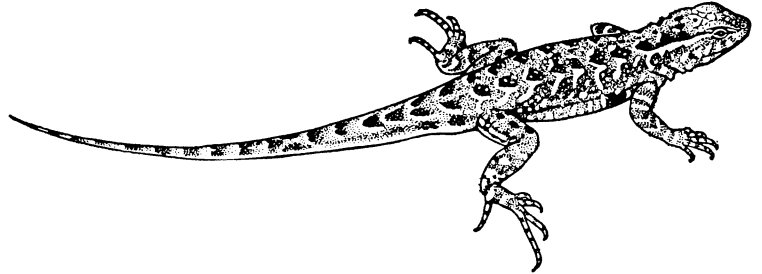
Concerning Stonehenge, it might be worthwhile to explore the possibility that it was built by some tribe alien to that area—perhaps the Hyksos who also infiltrated the Egyptian society. Astronomical relationships might have been incorporated in the Stonehenge by use of the Hyksos' Pyramid Inch.

In any case, it would be refreshing to hear less childish hypotheses concerning man's dim past . . . and origin.

*James Creasy,
Catawissa, Pa.*

nature note

Side-Blotched Lizard



From *Amphibians and Reptiles of Western North America*, Dr. R. C. Stebbins (McGraw-Hill)

The side-blotched lizard, *Uta stansburiana*, usually does several push-ups—four or five very rapid vertical bobbings lasting a fraction of a second—before it dashes off somewhere or just after it stops running. Scientists do not yet know why, although it has been suggested that these tiny reptiles make their presence known in their particular territory by this behavior and help scare off any intruder.

In a 182-page booklet, *Miscellaneous Publication No. 132*, just issued by the Museum of Zoology at the University of Michigan, Dr. Donald W. Tinkle explores these little-known lizards and their behavior in their natural habitat. Over a six-year period, more than 3,700 *Utas* were observed in study areas just over two acres in extent in Texas, Colorado and Nevada. As part of a growing scientific concern to observe how animals feed, breed and fight in the wild instead of in inhibitory laboratory conditions, Dr. Tinkle and his students—too numerous to mention—patiently sighted, marked, observed and recorded the behavior of their subjects. For instance, they observed

that in the field, aggression is quite strong in the young lizard. But when lizards are caught and live in captivity, this aggressive behavior is reduced. Also acts of courtship practically cease. The researchers never observed an instance of homosexuality among wild lizards—but in laboratory conditions, this was fairly frequent.

The side-blotched lizards are small—less than five inches long from snout to tail, which frequently is broken and then regrown. Males are generally unstriped, with blue flecks over the back and tail, and sometimes their flanks are orange or yellow. The female is usually a drab gray or brown, with two side stripes. They all have a prominent blotch or dark spot behind each foreleg.

In their natural habitat of desert washes, hillsides and sagebrush flats, these lizards thrive in the shadows of mesquite trees, yuccas and broomweeds. At night they burrow into sand. They are rather opportunistic feeders, the researchers observed, readily eating almost any insect of suitable size that passes near them whether they are basking in the sun or moving about.

SCIENCE NEWS

Copyright © 1967 by Science Service, Inc. Republication of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS is strictly prohibited.

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$6.50; 2 yrs., \$11.50; 3 yrs., \$16.50. Special trial offer for new subscribers only: 39 weeks, \$3.43. Single copy, 25 cents. No charge for foreign postage. Change of address: Three weeks' notice is required. Please state exactly how magazine is addressed. Include zip code.

Printed in U.S.A. Second class postage paid at Washington, D. C. Established as Science News Letter® in mimeograph form March 13, 1922. Title registered as trademark U. S. and Canadian Patent Offices. Indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Abridged Guide and the Engineering Index. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulation. UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Published every Saturday by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036. North 7-2255. Cable Address: SCIENSERV.

ADVERTISING

L. D. Young, Advertising Director, SCIENCE NEWS, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036, Phone 202-667-8945.

Advertising Representatives: SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPERS, General Advertising Department: 200 Park Ave., New York, N.Y., TN 7-5000; 400 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill., SU 7-3355; 800 Broadway, Suite 1100, Cincinnati, Ohio, 721-1254; Suite 211, Braniff Building, Dallas, Tex., FL 7-3847; 908 E. Northland Tower, Southfield, Mich., 444-4595; 6363 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif., OL 3-0026; Room 1522, Philadelphia National Bank Building, Philadelphia, Pa., LO 3-6275; 100 California St., San Francisco, Calif., 989-5570; Suite 417, 3384 Peachtree Rd., N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 261-5171.