

schools have been engaged in building model airplanes on a scale of 1 to 72 expressly for the U. S. Navy. The Navy wanted 50,000 models of 50 different airplanes. Soon this activity will be interrupted by summer vacations. There is no need, however, for science clubs to stop their work and experiments simply because summer is here and some schools will be closed.

Many students have had experience in building airplane models for the Navy. These boys and girls can give instructions to those who had but limited experience in the field.

Schools are being asked not to discard models which did not come up to the rigid specifications prescribed by the Navy. Instead, some of these models which may be slightly off on one or two dimensions will be acceptable to the Army for use by the Interceptor Command.

For the time being only those models enumerated will be accepted. However, other single, two-motored and multi-motored ships may be found useful later; so don't throw good models away.

Brig. Gen. Cannon has also asked the Junior Aviators, an organization sponsored by the Scripps-Howard newspapers, Boys' Clubs of America and other organizations as well as schools to cooperate in the Army program.

Science News Letter, May 30, 1942

PALEONTOLOGY

Fossil Skull in Museum Is of "Awful Alligator"

MEET PHOBOSUCHUS. That's from the Greek for "terrible crocodile" or "awful alligator."

The name is well merited. Phobosuchus is a six-foot-two-inch fossil skull representing a genus of giant reptiles that swam along the shores of shallow lakes and wallowed through swamps, in what is now the Big Bend region of Texas, during Cretaceous time, about 70 million years ago. The crushed fossil fragments, pieced together to make a restored skull, have just been placed on display at the American Museum of Natural History. Alongside is the skull of the largest known living crocodile species—a sea-going monster from the coasts of India, with a total length of 33 feet. It is dwarfed by comparison with the Phobosuchus specimen.

The skull was found a couple of years ago as a mass of crushed fragments, by Dr. Barnum Brown, curator of paleontology at the Museum. It has taken the intervening time to unscramble and re-



BIG JAWS

Restoration of the skull of a huge crocodile that once snapped these jaws in the Big Bend country of Texas—about 70 million years ago. Working on the restoration are (left to right) Dr. Barnum Brown, who discovered the fossil remains, Roland T. Bird, who assembled them, and Dr. Erich Schlaikjer, who helped excavate them. In the foreground, for comparison, is the skull of a present-day Asiatic marine crocodile. The restoration is at the American Museum of Natural History.

assemble the Chinese puzzle they presented, and to intercalate missing parts. The completed specimen is six feet two inches from base to snout-tip, three feet wide at the widest part, and bears a formidable array of pointed teeth, some

of them as much as six inches long. Comparative measurements indicate that the over-all length of the monster was not far from 45 feet.

The "awful alligator" shared his swamps and lakes with dinosaurs.

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GENERAL SCIENCE

10,000 High School Seniors In Science Talent Search

OVER 10,000 copies of the examination for the Science Talent Search, being conducted by Science Clubs of America, sponsored by Science Service, have been distributed to 1,734 secondary schools throughout the nation.

Entries in this contest for 40 trips to Washington where 20 Westinghouse scholarships will be awarded are being received until June 1.

Designed to bring to attention boys and girls who are potential leaders in scientific research of the future, the Science Talent Search is using a twelve-page two-hour examination administered

by school authorities as part of the selection technique. The contestants, who are all seniors ready to enter college, also are writing essays on "How Science Can Help Win the War." Teachers provide evaluation and scholarship data.

One feature of the Science Talent Search is that girls make their own opportunities in the contest. The trips and the scholarships will be allotted to boys and girls in proportion to the number of boys and girls competing.

It is expected that the winners of the Washington trips to be held July 13 to 15, will be announced about June 15.

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