SCIENCE NEWS LETTER

THE WEEKLY SUMMARY OF CURRENT SCIENCE

Diamond T-Formation
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A SCIENCE SERVICE PUBLICATION

Did you know this about fish?

Fresh water fish do not drink, but acquire water through skin osmosis; salt water fish, however, drink.

The age of a fish can be determined by the annual growth rings on its scales.

The copeina lays her eggs out of the water on a rock, whereupon the male splashes them with water and keeps them moist until they hatch.

The tuna, probably the fastest fish, has been clocked at 30 m.p.h.

Sharks have no bones; only tough cartilages.

Certain members of the cichlid family provide mouth havens for the young: the young swim into the parents' mouth for protection until they are too large to get in.

Some fish, like the flounder, change color and pattern according to their environment, far more efficiently than a chameleon; Dr. Curtis reproduces a photo of a flounder trying to match a revolving checkerboard!

All eels, no matter where in the world they may be caught when mature, are born in the same area—the Sargasso Sea in the North Atlantic; they migrate to fresh water to mature, but return to the Sargasso to spawn.

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THE LIFE STORY OF THE FISH

Dr. Brian Curtis, only $1.50

Once again available—one of the basic books explaining biology to the layman

Although fish are among the most interesting and most important forms of life, until Dr. Brian Curtis's "Life Story of the Fish" there existed no good, up-to-date book surveying fish.

This book, prepared by one of America's foremost ichthyologists (late Director of Fishery Research, State of California) is a middle-level book for both the biologist and the nature lover. Packed full of information, it surveys an enormous range of scientific data, correlating generations of scientific study and observation, yet is delightful to read.

Dr. Curtis first places the fish in its proper evolutionary position, and then tells what is known of the physiology of the fish: the skin, protective coloring, the skeleton, muscles, senses, the physics and physiology of vision, the complex questions of visual acuteness and color sensitivity, auditory sense or senses, the maintenance of equilibrium, the function of the lateral line canal for audition and temperature senses, the nervous system and the sense of pain, the function of the air bladder, digestive, breathing, excretory, and circulatory systems. The lay reader will find especially interesting the chapter on reproduction, where there is an absorbing discussion of the kinds of courtship, mating, spawning, and care of young.

Salmon and trout are singled out for a special chapter in which the still not completely understood phenomenon of migration is described. Relevant information is also given about such game fish as the tarpon, the tuna, swordfish, striped bass, black bass, and muskie, while other chapters summarize practical work in stocking, control, and similar material. The final chapter covers habits and adaptations.

You need no biology, no special background to be able to follow and enjoy this book. Dr. Curtis was a rare expositor, able to present impeccably accurate scientific matter with charm and ease. We recommend it for nature lovers, students of biology, zoologists, intelligent high school students, and even for specialists in other fields who want a solid, sound foundation of knowledge about an important life form.

Comments upon the previous printing: "Sets a high standard," Yale Review. "Lively, vivid, humorous," New York Times. "Clear, simple language, delightful," Saturday Review. "No account more precise and satisfying," N.Y. Herald Tribune.

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by Charles Sprague Sargent

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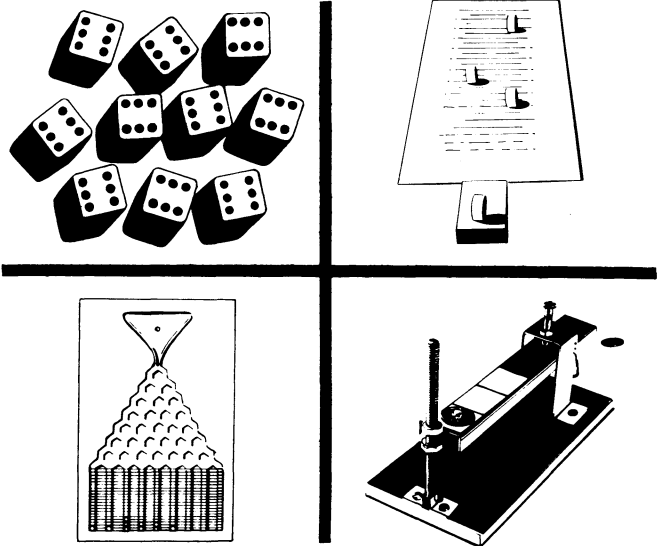
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