
Leeches (Hirundinea), Their Structure, Physiology, Ecology and Embryology. *K. H. Mann.*
Pergamon Press, Oxford. 1962. x+201 p. \$0.00.

Except in Germany and Central Europe, the study of leeches has been rather neglected by biologists. This is the more surprising in that the animals are conspicuous, common, and relatively easily reared in the laboratory. Furthermore, they are of considerable ecological importance as predators or parasites, as food for fish and birds, and as vectors of diseases in a number of the vertebrates. In former times, also, they were of considerable direct economic importance to man as blood-letters.

Because of the relatively small amount of work so far accomplished, the limits of knowledge are frequently reached, and it is one of the major merits of the book that many possible research problems are suggested, either implicitly or explicitly, that might well be tackled by interested investigators.

The book begins with a detailed discussion of the structure of the medicinal leech, inasmuch as this form is better known than any other species. The next chapter is devoted to a survey of the characteristics of the entire group. Thereafter the comparative physiology and structure of the individual organ systems is gone into. The final chapter concerns the ecology of leeches. In addition, in two appendices, there is a discussion of the taxonomy of fresh-water and marine leeches respectively, the latter by Prof. E. W. Knight-Jones. Keys are given to the fresh-water species of Europe, Great Britain, and North America, and to the marine genera of the world.

CHARLES C. DAVIS

Study of the Earth. Edited by *J. F. White.* Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1962. Paper bound. viii+408 p. \$3.95.

This book is a collection of "readings in Geology" which "does not restrict the study of the earth to narrow specializations, but helps make clear the unity and the wide range of problems that constitute geological science." Papers have been assembled into groups according to the following series of topics: the law of uniformity and geologic time; the earth model, problems and implications; crustal features and processes; past climates and drifting continents; the history of life; and origin and evolution of the earth.

The authors of the 26 papers are renowned scientists, many of them now near the peak of their productive researches, so the reader gets historical perspective with exposure to current ideas. A very valuable reference volume, with biographic notes about each author, and with a glossary.

THOMAS H. LANGLOIS