

Biological Briefs

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WRIGHT, WILLARD H. *Studies on Trichinosis*. XI. The Epidemiology of *Trichinella Spiralis*. *American Journal of Public Health* 29: 119-127. February, 1939.

This article reports the results of a study made to determine the incidence of trichinosis throughout the United States. The average incidence is between 16 and 18%. There was apparently no correlation between the extent of infestation and the types of population groups studied, except that where Mosaic laws prohibiting the eating of pork were strictly observed, the parasite was rare. Infestation was found to be heaviest along the North Atlantic seaboard and the Pacific coast, in regions where swine are fed mainly on uncooked garbage. At present, methods aiming towards control of the disease include a campaign to warn the public to cook pork well, and federal regulations requiring extended refrigeration or curing of all pork customarily eaten without cooking. Both methods are of considerable value, but the author suggests that regulations requiring that all garbage be cooked before use as food for swine would effectively reduce the rate of incidence of this parasite.

GRINNELL, JOSEPH. *Effects of a Wet Year on Mammalian Populations*. *Journal of Mammalogy* 20: 62-64. February, 1939.

After an unusually wet winter, Dr. Grinnell surveyed the mammalian and

bird population in northeastern California, where large areas of flat land had been flooded. Rabbits were scarce. Oregon ground squirrels, which hibernate in underground burrows, were far less abundant than usual, although the sub-species which nests in sloping terrain was not so badly affected as that which burrows in low, flat ground. The burrowers met death not only by drowning, but probably also through exposure when they could find no dry habitations. Thus for such south-western rodents, the flood factor may be important in establishing geographic races and likewise in the fluctuation of population numbers.

PRIOR, SOPHIA. *Carnivorous Plants and "The Man-Eating Tree."* Field Museum of Natural History Botanical Leaflet 23. 1939.

The leaflet presents descriptions and illustrations (drawings and photographs) of a number of carnivorous plants, including bladderworts, sun-dew, Venus's fly trap, and pitcher plants. In addition, the author quotes verbatim startling Sunday-supplement descriptions of such mythical floral wonders as the death flower, the snake-tree, the flesh-eating vine, and the man-eating tree, with the remark that as exploration continues to make known more and more African and South American territory, the habitat of these plants must continually be shifted to the furthestmost inaccessible regions.