

any floating material found in the sea. Larval stages of animals, jellyfish, protozoa, algae, and microscopic plants are collectively termed plankton. Plankton is the basic food of animals from the simple sponge to the largest mammal, the whale. It is said that a whale eats tons of plankton in one day. To the ancient mariners, plankton soup was a delicacy. It is also a delicacy to present day populations in parts of China and the Arctic.

An accumulation of plankton may be obtained by pouring buckets of sea water through the foot of a woman's nylon stocking. Other materials are too coarse and the minute organisms strain through.

When approximately one teaspoonful of solid matter has accumulated in the toe of the stocking, turn the stocking wrong side out. Wash the contents of the stocking into a *small* jar of sea water.

Because plankton lives only a short while when taken from its natural habitat and concentrated into a small area, study through a microscope should be done immediately. However, it is worthwhile to observe the plankton with a microscope even if the plankton is dead.

After the students have had an opportunity to observe plankton it may be preserved by adding, to the sea water, enough formalin to make a 5% solution.

If the ocean or Gulf of Mexico is accessible to pupils of the school, the study of zoology may be made more valuable and enjoyable by either taking the class to the sea or by bringing the sea to the classroom. In this way we can teach basic techniques, stimulate artistic abilities, and actually observe the things hitherto merely *labeled, classified, and forgotten*.

Since the majority of the earth's surface is covered with water and more than half of this is salt water, wise use of this plentiful resource should certainly include a study of the life which lives in it.

The 1953 March of Dimes

Polio incidence is getting worse in about the same percentage that the *March of Dimes* research is getting better. During 1952, about 55,000 cases were reported. This was a 100% increase over

1951, a 33% increase over the previously high year of 1949, and a 100% increase over the 1947-1951 five-year average. Of the 55,000 patients, some 7,000 had to be helped by iron lungs during some part of the year. This worst epidemic of all time was met squarely by the communities taking part in the 1952 *March of Dimes* campaign.

The 1953 *March of Dimes* is now under way. *The American Biology Teacher* trusts that all biology teachers are using their influence and energy to help. Biology classes offer unusual opportunities to bring out the basic relationships of research and disease control. Polio has recently been described as the only epidemic disease still on the increase in the United States. This is a problem for all students and all teachers, but particularly so for those in biology classes.

Take part in the *March of Dimes!*

The New England Biological Association

The New England Biological Association met at the University of New Hampshire, October 25, where Dr. George M. Moore showed an excellent colored film—*Marine Life at Wood's Hole*—taken by George Lower of Westtown, Pennsylvania. Some of the pictures of scallops swimming, comb jelly fish and Portuguese men-of-war moving about were unusual.

In the afternoon, Dr. A. F. Yeager took the group through the greenhouses and showed them the many successful results of their plant breeding experiments.

On December 13, there was a meeting of the NEBA at Boston College, where Mr. McCarthy spoke on biochemistry, Dr. Michael Walsh gave his new concept of the cell, and Mr. Ryan enumerated some factors of resistance in bacteriology.

In March there will be a meeting of NEBA at Deaconess Institute of Cancer Research, Boston, Massachusetts, and in May there will be another meeting, at Hartford, Connecticut.

MABEL A. POTTER,
Regional Chairman, NABT

THE CHANGES IN THE JOURNAL have apparently met with general approval, judging from the letters received and the comments made at the meeting. Only one unfavorable letter has been received; the author (name withheld on request) said he thought it was silly and that he would have to develop a new set of behavior patterns after all the years of looking at the table of contents right on the front page where it was handy.