

of good quality. The pages measure $5\frac{1}{8}'' \times 8\frac{3}{8}''$. Instructors planning a laboratory course in genetics will wish to examine this manual.

EDWARD C. COLIN,
Chicago Teachers College,
Chicago, Illinois

VINAL, WILLIAM G. *The Outdoor Schoolroom for Outdoor Living.* Published by the author, R. F. D. Vinehall, Cohasset, Massachusetts. 70 pp. 1952. \$1.00.

This interesting and different little book by "Cap'n Bill" Vinal brings together an amazing amount of information, activity material and philosophy. The author is not only a professor of Nature Education at Boston University, a widely known lecturer and consultant in nature work, but also the director of the Boston University Workshop in Outdoor Education. He develops the thesis that wherever interested teachers and students gather "in the fields, in the woods, by the water, there is the school." In line with this thesis, there are presented such things as a lengthy list of projects for outdoor schoolrooms, making a base map, a testing hike, and a plan for neighborhood cooperation. There is unfortunately neither a table of contents nor an index, a rather serious handicap in view of the stimulating contents of the book.

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Biology Laboratories

By "The Old Fossil"

At Wells High, Chicago

CHICAGO HERPETOLOGICAL CLUB had "The Old Fossil" as their speaker for a recent meeting. His subject was "Interesting Facts About the Lower Terrestrial Vertebrates." This included two written articles of his one titled: "Thirteen Snake Superstitutions—True If" and another "Reptile Facts." TOF found out that his presence was desired not so much for the dissertation on reptiles as it was to serve as a moderator to aid them in determining the feasibility of a field trip for the search of reptiles. TOF, having been president of the Chicago Biology Round Table a few years ago, sponsored a few trips; one involved several hundred people. He took his cue and found that a reptile trip should be conducted at night.

In case you have any ideas on field trips send them in and I will pass the information on to their sponsor. If you desire a copy of either of the articles mentioned I might be able to find you one and send it to you.

REPTILES AS PETS seemed to be common among the members. Most of them maintain specimens in their homes. One boy from a south side high school was describing his pet rattlesnake to me. This was about three feet long. Another boy interrupted the first to describe his pet rattler. His made a pygmy out of the first. The second boy's comment—"and I was looking in his mouth this week and I could not see, . . . could you tell me about that?" "What reptiles do you maintain?" "Where do you collect?" Gosh!

FLOWER POTS of the ordinary red clay variety come in sizes up to twelve inches inside diameter. The smaller sizes have half inch gradations; the larger pots increase one inch to the next size. The outside diameter and the height are equal. There is a shallow type known as a "pan." The pans are two-thirds the height of the ordinary pot. They are used for potting azaleas and similar plants. These are called "azalea pans." "Bulb pans" are one-half the depth of the ordinary pot. These are used for ferns and bulbs. There is also the clay saucer. Both pans and saucers are made of the red baked clay as is our original pot. We are using some of the twelve-inch pots to suspend from the ceiling of the greenhouse with ferns in them. A circle of number nine wire fitted under the collar of the pot has three suspension wires attached to it. This serves as a cradle for the arrangement.

THE JOHN G. SHEDD AQUARIUM is the largest and finest equipped in the world. About two hundred and fifty species of fish are shown. Invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and birds also have a place in the exhibits of the aquatics. The fish are from every continent and both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. These are exhibited in one forty-foot pool, and six galleries containing 132 exhibition tanks. The balanced aquarium room contains seven large aquariums and sixty-five smaller ones (from CPS Curriculum Bulletin V. 3, N. 17, Dr. Paul R. Pierce, Asst. Superintendent). Any visiting biologists should include a Shedd Aquarium visit on his tour agenda for Chicago.

CARTOON. The strip *Mark Trail* is one of the best color cartoons found in your Sunday newspaper. Are you fortunate enough to have this Post-Hall Syndicate featured in your funnies? They are portraits of nature.

MAKERS OF THE USA is the title of a color chart suitable for your bulletin board. Write Friendship Press, 156 Fifth Avenue for information. They are located in New York City.

OPTICAL PARTS is the title of a catalogue listing lenses, prisms and reflectors for optical instruments. This is published by one of the leading optical firms in the United States.

ALGAE VOL. II. is the tooled gold impression on the back of the leather bound book which was handed to me. It is approximately four and a quarter by six and three-quarter inches with approximately seventy pages. It is apparently hand made without a single stick of type. On the inside fly leaf is printed in pencil "MADE FOR MY GRAND- ()ATHER WHO WAS G()ARDING PRISONERS ON TORATU(G?)US ISLAND DURING THE CIVIL WAR H(erasuer perhaps) (L PORT)ER. On the sixth page is written, H. W. Mitchell, in longhand similar to the writing of tor's father who died in 1902 just four years out of Barnes Medical College (now Washington Medical College), St. Louis. He however had nothing to do with this book. The right page of each spread has a form of algae impressed into it. Each appears to be different. At the base of each is a hand painted or drawn design. Some are formal urns, scenes, just simple designs, and one has a couple of penciled figures about a tent camp. The sample of algae run to shades of red and brownish yellows.

BOWSTRING HEMP, or *Sansevieria*, or mother-in-law tongue, can be started by placing a leaf in a jar of water and permitting roots to grow on its tip. This takes several weeks, but is effective.

HABITAT. Nearly twenty years ago I removed a building down to a stone foundation. Recently I decided to fashion the two or three thousand cubic feet of native hewn stone into a ranch-type house on the acre of ground on the most beautiful spot between Indianapolis and South Bend. Mother, who is afraid of snakes, saw a small garden variety (the first I have noticed in the vicinity) crawl under a beautiful piece of granite, dark blue in color, forty-two inches by eight by ten. To quiet her fears I assumed a prone position to peer under the stone. No reptile was in sight. I remembered reading in a herpetology that stony ledges were their favorite haunts. So a pry pole was used and out he came. That was the last one we saw in the area. How he concealed himself I do not know.

A GENEALOGY STUDY was made by one of the first families. They just published their turn-of-the-half century edition. It is a report of over eighty-two hundred descendants from one couple. He was born in Europe in 1700, came to this country and settled in Pennsylvania in 1732. He purchased several tracts of land from William Penn. This man with the given name of Johann died later, leaving an estate of approximately forty thousand dollars and progeny of nine children. The descendants came from these nine children. The book makes an excellent reference for your study of heredity. It also serves as an incentive to the student to study his own family history. This is not a difficult task provided he uses a few postcards to write to individuals for information. (TOF spells his name Lichtenwalter which is one of the variations from the original Lichtenwalner, the genealogy study in question.)

SEVERAL INQUIRIES were received regarding the Principles of Biology, the hand microtomes, and Trypanosomes. The latter two items have not yet been sold but are good buys. D. Duff of Youngstown was the most recent one to inquire about the principles. Send your suggestions and inquiries regarding these or other problems to "The Old Fossil" at 5061 North Saint Louis Avenue, Chicago 25.

Biology In The News

Toothy Killers of the Swamps by Neil M. Clark, *Sat. Ev. Post*, Jan. 31, 1953, pp. 36-37 & 58-61.

Alligators are necessary members of Southern Swamp communities. Their habits and uses and