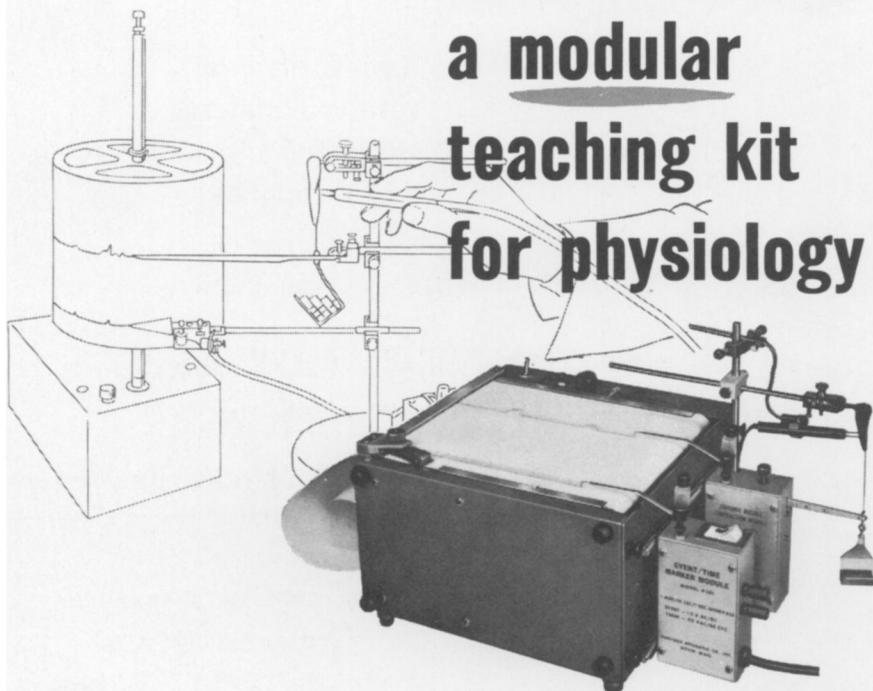


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lections, few nine-or ten-year olds will be able to handle the reading level. On the other hand, the publisher's designation of the target group for the volumes seems far too narrow. These books would certainly be suitable for and interesting to the junior high school level, and many senior high schools would also find them appropriate.

H. G.

IN THE WAKE OF THE SERPENTS, Bernard Heuvelmans, 645 pp., \$10.00, Hill and Wang, Inc., New York, 1968.

One reads this large book with mingled feelings. As a kind of compendium of (?) mythological marine zoology, its 14 chapters are fascinating; its illustrations are intriguing; and its documentation seems exemplary. Just the same, this reviewer lays the book down with some misgivings. What is the author's message, really?

"Let us hope that the naturalist . . . will welcome the giant sea-serpent." (p. 44); "Finally, a pelagic saurian shaped like a big crocodile seems to be confined to a zone of warm water at a depth yet to be discovered." (p. 573). Many similar statements suggest that this author would like to believe in sea-serpents, that he regards himself as Oudemans's successor—Oudemans, whose avowed aim was that of justifying the ways of the giant sea-serpent to mankind. Yet Heuvelmans acknowledges that so far, the evidence is negative.

One cannot accuse the author of assembling and publishing misinformation, or say that his argument is dishonest. Rather, one vaguely senses a kind of authorial frustration. The scientist is unwilling to perpetuate a hoax. Yet the wishful thinker seems to believe that a monstrous sea-serpent, now alive in the world's oceans, will someday turn up . . . and will be accepted by science.

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CURRENT PROBLEMS OF LOWER VERTEBRATE PHYLOGENY, NOBEL SYMPOSIUM 4, Tor orvig, 539 pp., \$35.00, Interscience Publishers, New York, 1968.

This report on a symposium held at the Swedish Museum of Natural History in June, 1967, contains 28 papers by distinguished biologists and is devoted to problems of the systematics of living and fossil fish, amphibians, and reptiles. Although this is an excellent and important volume, because of its specialized nature it would probably have little appeal for most high school biology teachers.

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