

Letters

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE TO BE AVOIDED

John W. Rushin's interesting article, "Biology Class Goes to the Stream" (*ABT* 36[9]:531), offers suggestions for some educational student-teacher field work, but it fails to mention that many states have very strict laws about *how* and *what* aquatic specimens may be collected. Penalties for violations tend to be severe.

Any teacher planning an aquatic field trip should first check with local conservation officers. A run-in with an unsympathetic fish warden would doubtless be entertaining and educational for the class, but it could be embarrassing and costly for the teacher.

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John W. Rushin comments:

A "run-in" with an unsympathetic game warden is a very real possibility when a biology class is working in the field. The fact that state laws vary across the country and that it is the responsibility of individual teachers to learn about the game laws in their states should have been emphasized in my article.

In Indiana a teacher can obtain a collector's permit from the Department of Natural Resources for collecting fish that are not covered by a regular fishing license. I obtained such a permit mainly because some of the fish we collected were under the minimum size limit in our state. I found that we did not need an Indiana permit for the bottom invertebrate samples we collected.

Our game warden did suggest that I get a permit, but he was very sympathetic toward outdoor field projects by biology classes. I believe that most game wardens have the same attitude. I might suggest that any teacher who is working on such a field project include their local game wardens in the project. In the past I have not done this, but I think that a discussion with the local game warden could add another important dimension to the study.

RULES FOR MARGIN MEASURING

I have read and reread the editorial "If It's Worth Doing ..." by Candace Bradford (*ABT* 36[9]:522), in which she expressed a desire for communications and contributions from some of us "clear out in nowhere." I have been a member of NABT and a faithful reader of *ABT* for many years. I have even picked up a few

good ideas I could use from time to time. On several occasions I actually sat down to prepare a short item to send off to you. But then I would begin to read the rules for submitting manuscripts and about half-way through I would have to pinch myself to make sure that I hadn't passed into the great beyond where the Almighty was pontificating to me in a loud, booming voice! By the time I was finished reading the rules, my first thought would be, "Good heavens! Do I sound like that when I am in front of a class?" My second thought was usually, "Forget it, back to the salt mines."

I have noticed over the years that many (or perhaps most) of the contributions are from college instructors. Perhaps they have more time to prepare manuscripts in the painstaking manner you require. But those of us who teach at the high school level and below, especially in the poorer districts, do not have graduate teaching assistants, teacher aides, secretaries, and so on, to do the clerical work for us. We have to write, type, duplicate, accumulate all our own tests and units. We have to figure and record all our own grades. And now in Iowa, we have to prepare our preliminary budgets and equipment orders for approval in early December. All of this along with the other mounds of administrative paper work that has to be done! And we should have time to prepare quadruplicate copies with carefully measured 1½-inch margins?

In short, I do not have the time and the energy to sit down and prepare a manuscript that has to be ultra-perfect down to the last correctly placed hyphen and carefully measured margin. Hats off to those who have the time and desire! You must be better organized than I.

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Candace Bradford comments:

The primary purpose of our "rules" for submitting manuscripts is to minimize the time and expense involved in preparing manuscripts for publication. We do not have graduate teaching assistants, teacher aides, or even a full-time secretary at our disposal either! It would appear that not all our contributors take advantage of such assistance when it is available. We have received material for consideration in all forms—even a few handwritten manuscripts—and if our reviewers feel the content is worthy of publication, we gladly work with their authors to get their manuscripts into a format that can be printed. Hopefully, our "Writers' Handbook," with which we are replacing our earlier (admitted) pontifications, will more