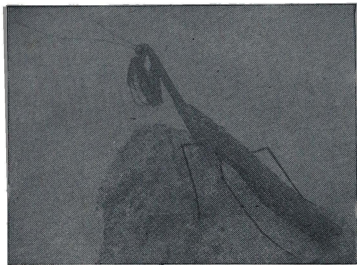


ELEMENTARY SCIENCE SECTION**THE PRAYING MANTIS**

PERHAPS no living creature conceals behind a "pious" appearance a more blood-thirsty and malignant disposition than that great hypocrite, the "praying mantis," a relative of the grasshopper and the cricket. From the moment of its birth, this insect is a murderer and a cannibal, and is, therefore, of use in preying on other insects.

With the front part of its body raised up in a prim pose, the hind part swelling out, and with its big arms folded up so properly beneath its small triangular head, the mantis does indeed look like an old lady at her prayers. But concealed on the inside of those arms are sharp and cruel claws, and that head, cocked now to the right, now to the left, holds two large eyes constantly on the lookout for unwary victims.

Perhaps a fly ventures too near. Suddenly the mantis springs; those long, scythe-shaped arms shoot out, and the fly is caught on their curved barbs. Then one leg after another of the unfortunate captive disappears in that greedy mouth; the body is sucked dry; and the mantis

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THE TARANTULA

THIS large, fierce, hairy, running spider is much dreaded by the natives of the warm countries where it is found. Its bite is fatal to insects and small animals, and is popularly supposed to be dangerous to man. People once believed that the only cure for its bite was dancing to lively music until the victim, bathed in perspiration, fell exhausted. From this belief came the name *tarantella* which is applied to an exceedingly lively Italian dance in which the speed increases to the end.

The true tarantula is found only in southern Europe, but the name is commonly applied to many other large spiders in various parts of the world. One of these is much larger and more venomous than the largest of the true tarantulas.

These spiders live under rocks and logs, or in deep burrows lined with soft silk which they spin from little silk glands located in the abdomen. They do not

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PRAYING MANTIS

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is back at its prayers. Fights to the death often take place between two of these insects, and the victor dines on the vanquished.

Members of the mantis family are found in nearly all tropical countries. They are quite common in the Philippines. The commonest species is leaf-green in color. The eggs are laid in tough cases attached to twigs, and as soon as the young hatch, they start killing small insects. Their life history is similar to that of grasshoppers.

As one sees a mantis, how prim and proper it looks with its "arms" folded so nicely and its head bowed between them! That's how it got its name—the praying mantis. But it would be nearer the truth to call it the "preying mantis," for this is just a pose that conceals its fierce, blood-thirsty disposition.

These creatures have been looked upon with superstitious awe since ancient times. In China they are kept in cages and matched in prize fights.

QUESTIONS

1. Have you seen a praying mantis in the Philippines?
2. Describe this insect.

TARANTULA

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spin webs in which to catch their prey, but wait for it like tigers, concealed among leaves or rubbish, or hiding within their burrows. When some unwary insect passes, the tarantula rushes out, bites it, and then drags it into its burrow. The bite either kills the victim at once, or paralyzes it and makes it helpless.

The tarantula does not chew and swallow the substance of its prey, but sucks out the blood and other body juices. Its large jaws, or mandibles as they are called, work up and down and not from side to side as do the jaws of most spiders.

Spiders as a class are not popular, and the tarantula is especially disliked. How quickly it can spring with those long hairy legs and seize its prey! That's why the tarantula does not have to weave a web, as so many spiders do.

QUESTIONS

1. Tell about a tarantula.
2. Does it spin a web? Why not?
3. How does it catch its prey?
4. How does it eat its prey?
5. Are you afraid of a spider? Why?

MONEY

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mains, it is redeemed at half its face value.

Some persons make a hobby of collecting coins and "paper" money. Such a person is called a numismatist. A good collection of coins and bills is quite valuable.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did ancient people not need money?
2. What different things have been used for money?
3. Why are gold and silver used for money?
4. Tell how coins are made.
5. Tell how "paper money" is made.
6. What is a person called who collects coins? Who collects postage stamps?
7. Have you seen any collections of coins?
8. Have you studied the pictures of the coins illustrated on page 209? Tell about some of the coins illustrated there.
9. Which ones interested you the most? Why?
10. Can you name all the Philippine coins of the present time? The bills used as "paper money"?
11. Do you think the money system of the Philippines is good? Why do you think so?