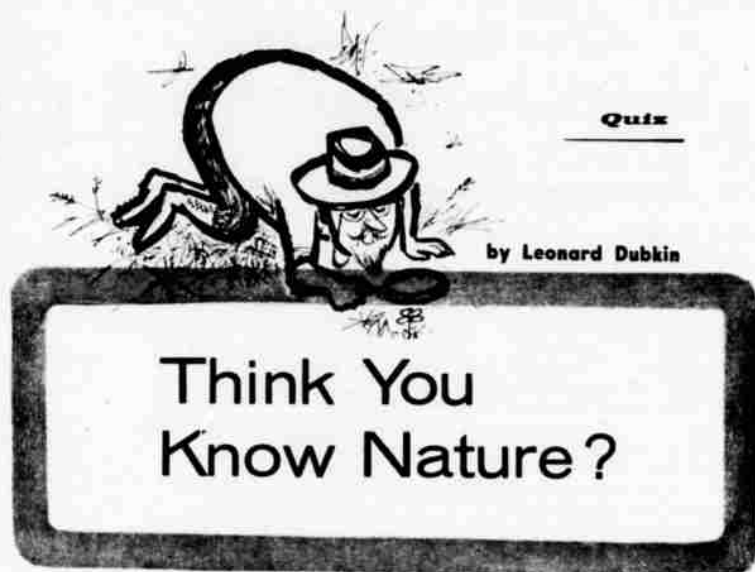




THERE ARE MANY myths and legends about the animal world that have been repeated so often—by word of mouth, in newspapers, magazines, and books—that they have come to be accepted by many people as fact. Even scientists are sometimes misled by an apparently authentic occurrence that actually isn't. How about you—how much do you really know about natural history? Take this test and see.

Do moles have eyes?

Yes, but skin grows over the eyeballs to protect them. Moles can distinguish light from darkness, and that's about all.

Does an early robin mean an early Spring?

Not necessarily. Many robins don't migrate but spend the Winter in protected places, where they aren't seen. During a warm spell they may venture out, and people seeing them think they have returned from the South.

Do moths eat clothes?

No. The clothes moth has a mouth in the form of a soft tube, and it couldn't eat clothes if it wanted to. The female moth lays her eggs on the clothes, and when the caterpillars hatch they make a meal of furs, wool, or cotton.

Are toads poisonous?

Yes. Toads have enough poison in glands on their skin to kill any dog foolish enough to eat them. But unless they are swallowed, the poison isn't harmful to human beings.

Are all snails harmless?

There are several species of marine snails that have a poisonous bite, but all land snails, and the fresh-water species, are harmless.

Do bees die after stinging?

Honey bees have stingers with barbs at the end. If they can't pull their stinger out, they die. But other species of bees don't have barbed stingers, and they can sting many times in succession.

Do hawks eat chickens?

Only one species, the Cooper's hawk, ever kills chickens. All other hawks are considered beneficial, because they live chiefly on mice, rats, insects, and other creatures harmful to crops.

Are oysters poisonous in months without an "r"?

No, but Summer is the spawning period for oysters, and their meat does not have a good flavor then.

Do fish-eating birds hurt fishing?

Herons, kingfishers, ducks, and other fish-eating birds actually improve conditions for the fisherman. The birds eat only the smaller kinds of fish, giving the others a chance to grow to the size that will satisfy the angler.

Do singing mosquitoes bite?

Male mosquitoes seem to enjoy singing in people's ears, and they do not bite. They feed on plant juices only, but the females sing, too, and they are blood-thirsty.



"Another thing—if we were taxpayers we couldn't afford to go South each Winter."



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