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## Reviews of Glenn L. Hoffman (1967). Parasites of North American Freshwater Fishes.

John Paling

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Paling, John, "Reviews of Glenn L. Hoffman (1967). Parasites of North American Freshwater Fishes." (1968). *US Fish & Wildlife Publications*. 91.  
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**Glenn L. Hoffman (1967).** *Parasites of North American Freshwater Fishes*. Pp. x+486; 252 text-figures. Berkeley: University of California Press; London: Cambridge University Press. Price £7 2s. 6d.

'This manual', the author explains, 'is intended to be an aid to the identification of the freshwater fish parasites of North America'. Judged by this objective, the book will be an invaluable source of reference for workers in this field. However as it does not set out to cover the ecology of fish parasites and furthermore as it concerns itself mainly with the American fauna, this book will probably have only a limited appeal to readers of this Journal.

Dr Hoffman has accumulated a considerable volume of information on his topic and has organized it in a manner designed to be of greatest practical value. Keys are presented which assist the reader to identify most parasites down to genus. In addition, the known species of each genus are listed and the reader is directed to the extensive bibliography in order to find information on species identification, life cycles and control. Particularly useful sections include a check list of North American fishes and their recorded parasites and a short section on the methods and techniques used when searching for parasites in the different organs and tissues of fishes.

In the first edition of such a comprehensive book there are inevitably minor errors and omissions. These are insignificant when viewed against the scope of the work as a whole. Perhaps a more serious criticism is that some of the keys appear rather daunting to the non-specialist in a particular taxon. If a student were to use this book, he would probably need to refer to a glossary and additional labelled illustrations in order to be confident in the use of some of the keys. No doubt these small deficiencies will be virtually eliminated when Dr Hoffman is granted the opportunity of revision which he looks forward to and deserves. At that time too we are promised the inclusion of keys down to the species level.

In the absence of a comparable book dealing with British fish parasites, this book will serve as a useful reference volume. However, the British reader will always be bearing in mind that many European parasites are not mentioned and thus a major element of uncertainty is introduced in any identifications obtained by the use of this particular manual.

JOHN PALING