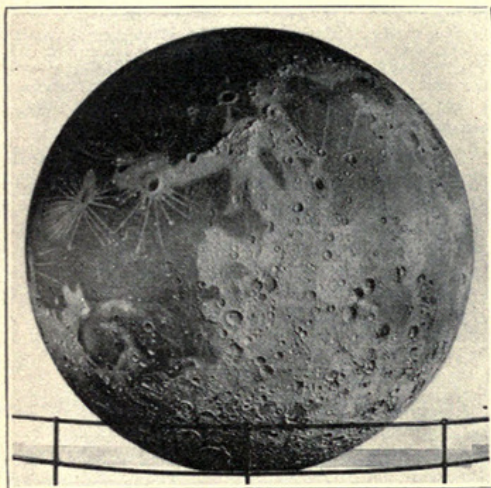


## WORLD'S LARGEST MOON MODEL MAY BE SEEN AT THE MUSEUM

The recent total eclipse of the sun by the moon, and the general interest aroused by the phenomenon, make timely the reminder that Field Museum has on exhibition in Clarence Buckingham Hall (Hall 35) the largest and most elaborate model of the moon ever made. This model represents in a vivid and accurate manner the character and appearance of the moon's surface, illustrating especially well such features of lunar topography as its gray plains or "seas" (the darker portions as seen with the naked eye), its mountains and high-



Model of the Moon

This, the largest and most elaborate model ever made of the earth's satellite, is to be seen in Clarence Buckingham Hall (Hall 35).

lands (the bright portions as seen with the naked eye), and its volcanic craters.

The model, which was presented to the Museum by the late Lewis Reese of Chicago, was made a number of years ago by Thomas Dickert, Curator of the Natural History Museum of Bonn, Germany, and Dr. J. F. Julius Schmidt, Director of the Observatory of Athens, Greece. It is 19.2 feet in diameter.

Except for occasional comets and meteors, the moon is the celestial body nearest the earth, and for this reason perhaps the most universally interesting as well as the one about which most is known. Some of the most interesting facts about it have been compiled by Dr. Oliver C. Farrington, Curator of Geology, as follows:

"The moon has no atmosphere. Hence, it can have no diffused light, and nothing can be seen on it except where the sun's rays shine directly. If a man could manage to travel to the moon he would instantly become invisible every time he stepped into the shadow of a lunar crag. Also because of the lack of an atmosphere no sound, however loud, can be heard on the moon. Changes of temperature on the moon are rapid and violent. Where the sun's rays strike, a temperature about that of boiling water is believed to be reached, while in unilluminated portions it is thought to go as low as 100° below zero.

"The force of gravity upon the surface of the moon is only one-sixth that on the earth. Therefore, a man weighing 150 pounds on the earth would weigh only 25 pounds on the moon, and the same muscular energy by which he could jump six feet on earth would carry him thirty-six feet on the moon. On the earth a body falls sixteen feet in one second; on the moon only 2.6 feet in the same time.

"The mean distance of the moon from the earth is 237,640 miles, but as it moves in an elliptical orbit it has at one point a remoteness of 253,263 miles, and, opposite to this, one of 221,436 miles. The diameter of the moon is about one-fourth that of the earth, or 2,160 miles, and its volume is one forty-ninth that of the earth. The mass of the moon (volume multiplied by density) is one eighty-first and the density three-fifths that of the earth. The period of the moon's revolution about the earth is 27 days, 7 hours, 43 minutes and 11½ seconds. As its period of rotation on its axis is the same, only one side of the moon is seen from the earth. Since, however, the moon's axis is inclined about 83° to the plane of its orbit, we sometimes see a little distance beyond each of its poles, and, since the rate of motion of the moon in its orbit varies slightly, we sometimes see a little beyond the eastern and western edges of the hemisphere. The total result of these librations is to make four-sevenths of the moon's surface visible to us. Of the remaining three-sevenths nothing is known.

"Owing to its slow rotation on its axis, the moon's day has a length of 29½ of our days. Each portion of its surface is therefore exposed to or shielded from the light of the sun for a fortnight continuously."

## GIANT FOSSIL MOLLUSK

The fossil remains of a giant mollusk which in life, some 500,000,000 years ago, was about ten feet long, are on exhibition in Ernest R. Graham Hall (Hall 38). Near-by is a restoration, in one of the large mural paintings by Charles R. Knight, showing how this creature of a long extinct species must have appeared when living.

The animal is known to paleontologists as *Orthoceras*, and is a member of the cephalopod family. The Museum's specimen was found near Troy Grove in LaSalle County, Illinois. The shell is long and straight, in contrast to those of most familiar modern mollusks. It is slightly conical or tapering, being composed of a series of chambers or segments, each slightly larger in diameter than its predecessor in the animal's growth. These were connected by an internal siphon or siphuncle. The animal lived in the last and largest chamber, vacating each chamber in turn as a new one was formed, according to Dr. Oliver C. Farrington, Curator of Geology.

A habitat group of American crocodiles is a noteworthy exhibit in the Department of Zoology.

## MORAY, LARGE TROPICAL EEL, IS PLACED ON EXHIBITION

BY ALFRED C. WEED  
Assistant Curator of Fishes

Eels are found in almost all waters of the world, from the equator almost into the Arctic and Antarctic zones, and from small streams and wave-washed beaches to the deepest parts of the oceans. The best-known ones are very long and slender; others are much thicker in body. Some swim freely at various depths, but most of them hide themselves more or less completely under stones, in crevices of the coral reefs, or in burrows in sand and mud.

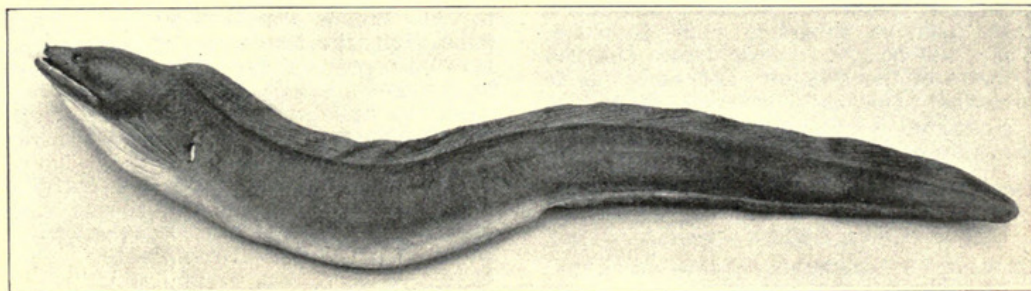
Morays are stout-bodied eels which take shelter among the rocks or coral reefs not far from shore in all warm seas. All morays have large mouths, and are armed with strong teeth. One group has rounded teeth with which they crush various kinds of shellfish for food. The other group has long teeth with sharp edges with which they can hold and tear living prey.

The green moray of Florida and the West Indies is one of the largest of the latter group. An excellent specimen of green moray was recently presented to Field Museum by Captain F. G. Saeger of Miami, Florida, at the suggestion of Colonel Lewis S. Thompson of Red Bank, New Jersey, who has himself given the Museum a number of valued fish specimens. Captain Saeger caught this moray off the Florida coast, and it has now been mounted by Staff Taxidermist L. L. Pray, and placed on exhibition in Albert W. Harris Hall (Hall 18). The

specimen is four feet seven inches long, and weighed about fifteen pounds when caught. The maximum length attained by morays ranges from about seven to nine feet.

The green moray lives in and around the coral reefs, and eats anything small enough to swallow or soft enough to tear apart. Morays in general prefer for habitation coral reefs or other places where they can find hiding places. Even when kept in an aquarium they do not seem content unless they can conceal at least part of their bodies. If an eel six feet long can thread itself through a six-inch length of tile or stove-pipe it seems to feel safe. Among the coral reefs it seems satisfied if one loop of its body is hidden behind a knob of coral. Often a moray will hide itself in deeper crevices and make vigorous attacks upon anything that comes into its retreat. West Indian fishermen who thrust their hands into holes in the coral in search of crawfish are often bitten severely by morays. Hawaiian fishermen who fish in a similar fashion after diving to depths of ten to twenty feet are sometimes held prisoner by morays until they drown.

There is no agreement as to the food value of the moray. In many places they are eaten and considered to be delicious. On the other hand in many localities they are regarded as poisonous, especially the green moray. This, however, is due to the prejudice which causes many other foods green in color to be looked upon with suspicion.



West Indian Moray

This large eel is now on exhibition in Albert W. Harris Hall (Hall 18).





Weed, Alfred C. 1932. "Moray, Large Tropical Eel, is Placed on Exhibition." *Field Museum news* 3(10), 3-3.

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