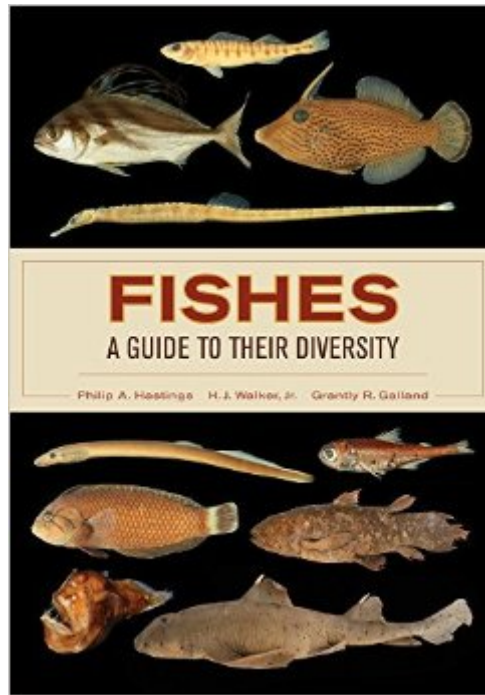


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# Fishes: A Guide To Their Diversity



## Synopsis

There are more than 33,000 species of living fishes, accounting for more than half of the extant vertebrate diversity on Earth. This unique and comprehensive reference showcases the basic anatomy and diversity of all 82 orders of fishes and more than 150 of the most commonly encountered families, focusing on their distinctive features. Accurate identification of each group, including its distinguishing characteristics, is supported with clear photographs of preserved specimens, primarily from the archives of the Marine Vertebrate Collection at Scripps Institution of Oceanography. This diagnostic information is supplemented by radiographs, additional illustrations of particularly diverse lineages, and key references and ecological information for each group. An ideal companion to primary ichthyology texts, *Fishes: A Guide to Their Diversity* gives a broad overview of fish morphology arranged in a modern classification system for students, fisheries scientists, marine biologists, vertebrate zoologists, and everyday naturalists. This survey of the most speciose group of vertebrates on Earth will expand the appreciation of and interest in the amazing diversity of fishes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was greatly excited for a new book covering fish diversity, but now that I have spent some time with it I would have to describe it as underwhelming. For a topic as broad as this, the book only contains around 240 pages devoted to the subject at hand. This is clearly not enough room to cover the subject exhaustively, and often times the treatment of certain groups is almost inconsequential.

For example, the 18 families of Characiformes are not discussed at a family level at all. Morphologically diverse groups such as Osteoglossiformes are likewise given short shrift. Large families that would benefit from a subfamily or tribe level treatment get little more than a single brief paragraph. Life history and biogeography is often given little more than a single sentence. Etymology is completely absent. The authors seem to favor morphological studies, and have often chosen to ignore the findings of recent molecular work. One example is their traditional placement of Callionymidae with the gobiiforms and not the molecularly supported relationship with the Syngnathiformes. (Though you'd never know this as the family is never mentioned in the text and only appears in the index!!!) Another example is their traditional treatment of Gobiidae, whereas well-supported molecular studies show microdesmids, ptereleotrids and schindlerids belong inside the group, which is often treated as two separate families now. While some molecular findings are used (e.g. Ovolentariae), the treatment is too haphazard and arbitrary and it feels like much of this book is already outdated. Another frustrating feature, or rather lack thereof, is the author's choice to ignore fossil fish diversity. Major extinct groups like acanthodians, ostracoderms and pteraspids are given zero mention.

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