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Myxomycetes: A Handbook of Slime Molds

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Steven L. Stephenson, Henry Stempen : Myxomycetes: A Handbook of Slime Molds before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Myxomycetes: A Handbook of Slime Molds:

Hidden in the leaf litter and other moist, shady places of woodlands and gardens lives a remarkable group of organisms. Myxomycetes - A Handbook of Slime Molds introduces observers to the lives of these organisms, which are distinguished by a cycle of changes that are quite beautiful, if often in miniature. Myxomycetes have some characteristics in common with the true molds or fungi, most noticeably the production of colorful spore-producing structures. But their affinity with other, more "primitive" living things is borne out by their alternating motile phase, in which individual cells coalesce into an amoeba-like plasmodium, able to creep about over the surface and also often brightly colored. Virtually all the species one is most likely to encounter are included. Steven Stephenson and Henry Stempen have written a field guide to a group of organisms for which guides have not been generally available. Yet this is not just a guide to the identification of slime molds. There is extensive information on myxomycetes as living organisms: their structural features, their distribution in sometimes surprising habitats such as snowbanks and deserts, and their ecological associations with plants and animals. Since they are best studied as living beings, simple methods for culturing myxomycetes are included. Detailed watercolor portraits, pen-and-ink drawings, and photographs

illustrate the forms and features of the various life stages of myxomycetes. These superb illustrations are a valuable part of the use of the book as a ready reference for anyone with an abiding interest in the beauty and diversity of the natural world. References, a comprehensive glossary, and an index complete the work.