

A SUGGESTIVE NOTE AS TO WHAT MIGHT BE BROUGHT  
TO LIGHT ABOUT THE PADDLEFISH THROUGH  
DEEPLAKE DREDGING.\*

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One of the most remarkable things in modern biological research concerns what has been brought to light through deep sea dredging. Many new species of fishes, often grotesque in appearance, constructed so as to resist pressure, and many of them furnished with phosphorescent organs enabling them to see in the darkness of the abyss, have through such researches been added to the list. An instance of the kind from our own marine waters relates to the only specimen known of *Raja abyssicola*—a male obtained at a depth to 1,588 fathoms from off the coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia. Upon this fish, in my "Check List of the Fishes of the Dominion of Canada and Newfoundland," I bestowed the vernacular name of Deep Sea Ray; and in a foot note, here quoted from that work, I drew attention to that remarkable find:—

"No ray was ever found at any such a depth as this before. A ray from a depth of 565 fathoms is included in the list of deepsea fishes obtained by the dredgings of the 'Challenger' (Günther), and '*R. mamillidens*', a uniform jet-black species, has been obtained from a depth of 597 fathoms in the Bay of Bengal' (Bridge), but as far as available records show, none have been obtained at a greater depth than some 600 fathoms except this one."

Now, it has occurred to me, for reasons presently to be pointed out, that possibly something concerns the distribution of the Paddlefish (*Polyodon spathula*), which as yet is unknown. This singular fish still exists in plenty in the Mississippi Valley, and in waters of the southern United States, besides which, at exceedingly rare intervals, it has been found in waters of the Great Lakes system, its records, as again quoted from my "Check List," being these:—

"Exceedingly rare in Canada—the following appearing to be its records: Lake Huron, near Sarnia, Ontario (two specimens); Spanish River, District of Sudbury (one specimen); Lake Helen, Nipigon River (one specimen); Lake Erie (if from the Canadian side of the lake—one specimen): plentiful in the Mississippi valley and southern United States: also recorded from Ohio River (LeSueur, 1817, as *Platirostra eden-*

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