

adequate idea of its voracious appetite, for it is said to swallow other fish as large and as heavy as itself. It is able to do this because its stomach is distensible to an extraordinary degree. Its favourite food in our regions seems to be the hake, the schools of which it follows, but its fare is made up of a great variety of forms such as soles, flounders, dog-fish, herring, cod, haddock, skates, sea-ravens, sculpin, crabs, and squid.

Though its meals are indeed heavy, they are probably not frequent, for the stomachs of a large percentage were found to be empty. The digestive powers of the stomach seem to be exceedingly slow and fishermen are known to have sold to unsuspecting buyers, fish that were taken from the stomach of the angler. In one case three quarters of a hundred were obtained from one angler and sold.

HABITS.

From the earliest times, writers have made mention of the peculiar habits of this fish. Cicero, for instance, says (*De Nat. Deorum* II-49) that fishing-frogs are wont to bury themselves in the sand and to move in close proximity to the water; and that the fish which approach them, as if for food, are destroyed by the fishing-frogs and consumed.

As we have seen, its structure suggests much concerning its habits. Its flat form with eyes on the top of the head and looking upwards indicate that it is a bottom-dwelling fish. Its hand-like ventral fins and the long arm-like supports of its pectorals show that it is adapted rather for crawling on the bottom than for swimming. Its brown colour harmonizes with the seaweeds, and the fringe of appendages, so much like small fronds of seaweed, increases the similarity with its surroundings. This feature affords some compensation for its poor swimming ability; for by means of this protective colouring, it can the more easily conceal itself while lying in wait for prey. In addition to this protection it possesses the dorsal filaments, the first of which is movable in all directions and is provided with a bait-like appendage, which no doubt is a lure to other fish, and for this reason, as we have seen, the name angler has been given to it. But it is more probable that the angler uses this structure as a sense organ to learn of the presence of other fish. Other names also suggest its habits. It is called the goose-fish, for instance, because it is known to have swallowed geese which were floating on the surface of the water. Seven wild ducks are said to have been found in the stomach of one angler and six coots in another.

While the angler is normally a bottom fish, it occasionally comes to the surface and fishermen say that it does so especially during a storm.