

Eelworm Predators (review)*—Dr. Duddington's book is an introduction to the group of fungi characterised by their predacious nature, that is by having the ability to capture and digest microscopic animals. He has presented the subject from the point of view of their possible use in controlling eelworm diseases of various crops, the book being sub-titled "A new approach to the eelworm problem". The opening chapters describe the eelworm menace, with brief references to some of the more important types and their life histories, and the present methods and attendant difficulties associated with their control. This is followed by a review of the nematode-trapping fungi which deals with the species concerned, their ecology, and the various methods by which capture of the host animal is effected. The final section of the book gives a detailed account of the attempts that have been made to direct the predacious activities of the fungi towards the control of certain eelworms parasitic on plants and animals.

The text is supplemented with 7 text-figures and 24 photographic plates, and has been written in "simple language for the reader with no special scientific knowledge". A bibliography is provided, dealing mainly with the work carried out on the aspect of biological control. Two appendices deal with the collection, cultivation and examination of predacious fungi.

The book is generally interesting and readable, but is marred by repetition. The "new approach to the eelworm problem", which is presented in the final three chapters, is unconvincing and gains nothing by the detail involved in its presentation. The conclusions which seem inescapable are that it is premature to consider the predacious fungi as affording anything more than a possibility of eelworm control, and that a considerable amount of research is required before any optimistic outlook on the subject is justified.

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* *The Friendly Fungi*, by C. L. Duddington. London, Faber & Faber, 1957. Price 21 shillings.