

## Ophyss

The Ophyss is a snake-like creature which is found in the Antarctic islands of the Pacific. It is peculiar in that it can regenerate itself indefinitely as long as its head is not destroyed, and it is very susceptible to ESP. The Serpentarium has acquired a number of Ophyss eggs, and it is your job to keep them alive after they have hatched. The game of Ophyss can be played by one or two players.

### Two players

There are two kinds of Ophysses, red and purple, and each has a separate den in the Serpentarium. Each player controls one of the kinds. The arrow keys control the purple Ophysses and the I, J, K, and M keys control the red ones. An Ophyss can only move through clear territory! It can not crawl over rocks, the yellow fence, itself; or the other Ophyss. It will drown in the water. Like a shark, it will move continuously forward (unless stopped by a barrier). Notice that when you turn your Ophyss, it does not move forward at all, but only turns its head. Be careful — your Ophyss can get wedged in between obstacles — even its own body can cause it to get stuck!

Ophysses eat frogs. Frogs enter the Serpentarium from the left, and hop from left to right. The wavy lines on either side of the screen are lifelines — they indicate the amount of time left before your Ophyss dies from lack of nourishment. When an Ophyss eats a frog, its lifeline starts back at the top and the Ophyss grows in length by one space. (If it catches a frog by turning its head, the new length will be added on the next move forward.) The Ophyss must eat a frog before the lifeline runs out or it will die. Ten points are awarded for each frog catch.

The principal object of Ophyss is to eat frogs and grow your Ophyss to 15 spaces long. Then your Ophyss will expire and a new baby Ophyss starts out from its den. You receive 100 points for this.

In addition to eating frogs, an Ophyss may also bite the tail off of the other Ophyss. No nourishment is received from this, but you get 20 points. A bitten Ophyss is paralyzed for one move; so take another bite if you can. If you eat the other Ophyss up to his head, he will die, and you get 50 points.

Each move consists of one frog hop and one Ophyss move. For each game the Ophyss moving first is chosen at random. The frogs can hop over an obstacle, but can only land on a clear space. One frog is chosen at random for each move. It will hop two spaces if clear, or over the water, or one space if clear. If the chosen frog is totally blocked, no frog will jump that turn. When a frog reaches the fence at the far right, it will stay there and a second frog will start out on the same line. When a frog is eaten, a new frog starts out on the same line, unless it was the one stuck at the fence. Two frogs will be stuck on the maze-bridges to help Ophysses cross the bridge before its lifeline runs out.

### One player

First choose a level of difficulty (1-7) and press ENTER. One is easiest, seven hardest. Your Ophyss (purple) will operate exactly as in the two-player version. However, the red Ophyss will be computer controlled. The robot Ophyss has only one goal: to bite off the tail of your Ophyss. The difficulty level determines the intelligence of the robot Ophyss. It does not need to eat and has no time limit. You can bite off its tail, and it will die if you reach its head, but it has an unlimited supply of spare parts and will always come back. When your Ophyss dies, the robot one will too, and start over.

At level 1 your point award for growing 15 spaces will be 100 points, and for destroying the robot, 50. For each higher level the awards will increase by 10 points. Note that each time you receive a bonus the difficulty level will increase.

The robot will always make at least one move forward after it turns its head. If it finds itself in a position where it can't move, it will die and start over again. If the robot gets its head next to your Ophyss, it will wait for the tail-end. You cannot get away from it — your only recourse is to get it first.