

DRACO VOLANS.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Corpus tetrapodum, caudatum, alatum; alis propriis.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 358.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS.

DRACO brachiis ab ala distinctis.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 358.

Simile est Lacertis hoc animalculum nisi quod membranam habeat lateralem, radiis quibusdam offeis firmatam, et quam ad arbitrium vel complicare vel explicare potest. Hinc Lacerta volans non inepte nominari posset. Celeberrimus tamen Linnæus, in *Systemate Naturæ*, genus illi distinctum nomine Draconis dedit.

Africæ indigena est, et ut aliæ minores Lacertæ, inter arbores vagatur, more sciuri volantis, ope membranæ suæ lateralis faliens; an volitans potius dicam? Aliarum lacertarum more insectis vescitur, quæ (ut verisimile mihi visum est) sacculo quem habet in gula, ingerit, postea pro arbitrio, et per otium comedenda.

Tegitur undique Draco volans squamis parvulis, et plerumque est coloris subcinerei, fusco alboque plus minus vivide dorsum et alas variatus.



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T H E
FLYING DRAGON.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Body four-footed, tailed, and winged;

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

DRAGON with the fore-legs unconnected with the wings.

It is merely in being furnished with a lateral expanded membrane, strengthened by a few radii, or bony processes, that this animal differs from the Lizard tribe; so that it might, without impropriety, be named the Flying Lizard. Linnæus however, in his celebrated work, the *Systema Naturæ*, has instituted a distinct genus for it, under the title of *Draco* or *Dragon*.

This animal is an inhabitant of Africa, and like many other of the smaller Lizards, delights in wandering about trees, and from the peculiar mechanism of its lateral membranes, is enabled to spring from bough to bough, and support itself in air for a moment or two, in the manner of a flying Squirrel. Like other Lizards, it feeds on insects, and it is not improbable that the remarkable gular pouch with which it is furnished, may be a provision of Nature, for retaining for some time, a number of small insects which it may collect, to be afterwards swallowed more at leisure.

This

This animal is covered with very small scales, and is generally of an ash-colour, varied and clouded on the back and wings with brown and whitish; which variations in the different specimens of the animal are more or less deep.



Shaw, George. 1789. "The Flying Dragon, *Draco volans* [Pl. 8]." *The Naturalist's Miscellany* 1(III), <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.310662>.

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