

Another ophiophagous species, with the Cobra hood, is *Hamadryas hannah* of Cantor, or *Maia vittata* of Elliot; a specimen of which (9 feet long, and now mounted in the Museum) I obtained in the Midnapore jungle.

Mr. Layard some time ago informed me of a popular notion among the natives of Ceylon respecting a "horn" which is said to grow sometimes, but very rarely, on the forehead of the jackal; and this horn is regarded by them as a specific of innumerable virtues. Strange to say, the same notion is equally current among the natives of Bengal, who believe that it ensures the prosperity of its possessor, and success in every undertaking.—E. B.—*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, No. 206, Aug. 1849.

On Cypræa umbilicata and C. eximia of Sowerby.

By J. E. GRAY, Esq.

Cypræa umbilicata was described from a single specimen which was formerly in the Tankerville Collection and is now in the British Museum. From its external resemblance to some specimens of *Cypræa Pantherina*, some peculiarities in its formation, and especially from certain apparent irregularities in its teeth, it has been thought that it might be a monstrosity or irregular growth of that species.

The discovery of the habitat by Mr. Gunn, who has kindly sent two specimens of the species to Europe, has removed this impression, and shown that it is a distinct species; and that what was regarded as the irregularities in the plaits of the front of the pillar, is in fact the normal form of the species.

Such being the case shows that the species should be removed from the genus *Cypræa*, as restricted in my monograph in the Zoological Journal, and placed in the genus *Cyprovula*, first described in that work.

The shell, instead of having the single large plait in front of the inner lip separated from other plaits by a wide space, has the front of the inner lip covered with several oblique plaits, nearly up to the front edge of the notch.

It also agrees with *Cyprovula* in the spire being concave or sunken, forming a deep umbilicus.

Cypræa eximia, figured in Strzelecki's 'New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land,' is a very nearly allied species, and equally a *Cyprovula* (*eximia*). It differs in the body being more globular and the canal longer. Both these species are to be distinguished from the other *Cyprovulæ* by the canal at each end of the mouths being more developed and produced: they also both have a somewhat angular depression across the upper part of the anterior canal, at the anterior extremity of the dorsal line, evidently formed by the junction of the two expansions of the mantle in this part.

The elongation of the canals, and the depression above referred to, are more developed in *Cyprovula eximia* than in *Cyprovula umbilicata*. They are, especially the latter, the giants of the genus. The original specimen of *C. eximia* is in the cabinet of Mr. John Morris of Kensington.

To give some idea of the extraordinary price which is now sometimes required for shells, I may state that the second specimen of this Cowry, sent home by Mr. Gunn to a London collector, was offered by him to Miss Saul for £30, and eventually realised that price.—*From the Proceedings of the Zoological Society for Nov. 1849.*

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

To the Editor of the Annals of Natural History.

MY DEAR SIR,—I send you a few notes on the newly-arrived Hippopotamus, whilst the impressions of the survey of this truly extraordinary quadruped are fresh in the mind, and thinking they may interest our zoological friends in the country who have not yet had the opportunity of inspecting this great rarity.

The young Hippopotamus was safely housed in the comfortable quarters prepared for it at the Zoological Gardens about 10 o'clock on Saturday night (May 25th), having arrived by special train from Southampton, where it was landed from the 'Ripon' steamer which reached that port early in the morning. The strong attachment of the animal to its keeper removed every difficulty in its various transfers from ship to train, and from waggon to its actual abode. On arriving at the Gardens, the Arab who has had the charge of it walked first out of the transport van, with a bag of dates over his shoulder, and the beast trotted after him, now and then lifting up its huge grotesque muzzle and sniffing at its favourite dainties, with which it was duly rewarded on entering its apartment. When I saw the Hippopotamus the next morning, it was lying on its side in the straw with its head resting against the chair on which its swarthy attendant sat; it now and then uttered a soft complacent grunt, and, lazily opening its thick smooth eyelids, leered at its keeper with a singular protruding movement of the eyeball from the prominent socket, showing an unusual proportion of the white, over which large conjunctival vessels converged to the margin of the cornea. The retraction of the eyeball is accompanied by a protrusion of a large and thick 'palpebra nictitans,' and by a simultaneous rolling of the ball obliquely downwards and inwards or forwards.

The young animal was captured at the beginning of August 1849, on the banks of the Nile about 350 miles above Cairo: it was supposed to have been recently brought forth, being not much bigger than a new-born calf, but much stouter and lower. The attention of the hunters was attracted to the thick bushes on the river's bank in which the young animal was concealed, by the attempt of its mortally wounded mother to return to the spot. When discovered, the calf made a rush to the river, and had nearly escaped owing to the slipperiness of its naked lubricous skin, and was only secured by one of the men striking the boat-hook into its flank: it was then lifted by one of the men into the boat. The cicatrix of the wound is still visible on the middle of its left side: the attendant informed me that the scar was much nearer the haunch when the animal first arrived at Cairo; its relative position has changed with the growth of the body.



Gray, John Edward. 1850. "On *Cypræa umbilicata* and *C. eximia* of Sowerby." *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 5, 514–515. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03745486009494959>.

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