

## PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

## ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

May 14, 1861.—Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S., V.P., in the Chair.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THREE NEW SPECIES OF BIRDS FROM  
GUATEMALA. BY OSBERT SALVIN, M.A., F.Z.S.

The three birds I propose to describe in this paper form part of a collection lately brought to this country by Mr. Robert Owen, Corresponding Member of this Society, from Vera Paz, Guatemala. The greater part of this collection was formed by one of the collectors I employed during a visit to Coban in the early part of last year: the low-lying lands of Central Vera Paz in the neighbourhood of a village called Chisec, situated on one of the confluent of the Rio de la Pasion, is the locality from which they were derived. The rest of the collection was formed by Mr. Owen himself at Coban, or in the adjacent mountains. Amongst the known forms are many of considerable rarity, besides several additions to our knowledge of the Avi-fauna of the country from which they come.

1. CYPHORHINUS PHILOMELA.

*Supra brunneus, plumis anguste nigro marginatis, pileo et uropygio obscurioribus: subtus fuliginosus, plumis medialiter nigris, et nigro terminatis, gula pallidiore, lateribus brunneis nigro transfasciatis: alis caudaque nigris, plumis tectricum remigum macula parva subapicali ochraceo-alba: rostro nigro, pedibus fuscis.*

Long. tot. 4, alæ 2·3, caudæ 1 poll. angl. et dec.

*Hab.* In Prov. Veræ Pacis sylvis montium.

*Obs.* Affinis *Cyphorhino bamblæ* ex Cayenna, sed tectricibus alarum maculatis et non albo vittatis facile notabilis.

This Wren belongs to the division of this genus which Dr. Selater has classed under the name of *Microcerculus*. It is known to the natives as the 'Ruisseñor,' or Nightingale—a name it has acquired from its great vocal powers.

2. EMBERNAGRA CHLORONOTA.

*Supra olivacea, pileo cinereo: subtus cinerea, gula et ventre medio albis, crisso flavidiore, lateribus olivaceis: vitta utrinque pilei vittaque angusta per oculos transeunte nigris: alis fuscis, extus dorso concoloribus: tectricibus subalaribus et campterio læte flavis: rostro superiore nigro, inferiore corneo, pedibus carneis.*

Long. tot. 5·75, alæ 2·6, caudæ 2·5.

*Hab.* In Prov. Veræ Pacis regione calida.

*Obs.* Affinis *Embernagræ conirostri* ex Nova Granada, sed statura minore, dorso olivaceo pectoreque cinereo dignoscenda.

Several specimens of this *Embernagra* are in the collection, all closely agreeing in the above characters.



## 3. APHANTOCHROA ROBERTI.

*Aureo-viridescens, supra unicolor : subtus gula cum mento lateribusque obscurioribus, ventre medio vix viridi lavato, plumis late pallido ochraceo terminatis, ventre imo albo : crisso viridescenti-fusco, plumis albo clare marginatis : alis purpurascenti-nigris, tectricibus subalaribus viridescens : cauda aureo-viridescens ; rectricum duarum externarum media parte nigra, parte apicali alba : rectricibus reliquis nigro terminatis : rostro omnino nigro, pedibus nigerrimis.*

Long. tot. 4.75, alæ 2.75, caudæ 1.9, rostri a rictu 1.

*Hab.* In Prov. Veræ Pacis regione calida.

*Obs.* Affinis *Campyloptero curvieri*, Gouldi, ex Costa Rica, sed rostro omnino nigro, et caudæ fascia nigra latiore distinguenda.

A single specimen, marked male, is in the collection ; I have dedicated it to Mr. Robert Owen.

REMARKS ON PALLAS'S SAND-GROUSE (*SYRRHAPTES PARADOXUS*).

By ALFRED NEWTON, M.A., F.Z.S.

Our Secretary having entrusted to my charge an example of *Syrrhaptes paradoxus* which died at the Gardens a few days ago, I am desirous of recording the results of my examination of it.

I must apologize to the meeting for the imperfection of the observations I am about to offer. I have not been able to compare the skeleton of this bird with that of other Sand-Grouse, except from memory ; and I prefer to confine my remarks to the structure of the sternal apparatus. This, as is the case in other species of the peculiar group to which *Syrrhaptes* belongs, offers at first sight an unquestionable resemblance to that of many of the *Columbidæ*, particularly of those members of the family which possess terrestrial habits. The similarity seems principally to arise from the form of the lateral processes of the sternum, which in *Syrrhaptes* are widened and partially united to the main portion as in *Chamæpelias* and *Geopelia*, instead of being singularly prolonged and acuminate as in the more typical *Gallinæ*. The resemblance is also increased by the exceedingly deep keel, which is of similar conformation to that of the *Columbidæ* generally. But here the likeness ends. The coracoid bones, which I am inclined to regard as the most characteristic in, as they are the most peculiar to, the ornithic skeleton, are plainly framed on the true Gallinaceous model. The furculum is very different from that of any other group of birds which I happen to remember, and bears no resemblance to the same bone in the *Phasianidæ* or *Tetraonidæ*. Still less, however, does it indicate any approximation to the same part in the *Grallæ*, or I may say of the *Columbidæ*, with both of which groups the Sand-Grouse have been supposed to have affinity. From the peculiarities, therefore, of the sternal apparatus I am fully of opinion that Bonaparte, and those authors who have followed him, are quite right in elevating the Sand-Grouse to the dignity of a family (*Pteroclidæ*), though I imagine



they were chiefly led to that conclusion by an examination of the external characters only.

I should have felt it incumbent upon me to have made some remarks on the information possessed by naturalists respecting this rare and curious bird; but almost all that can be said on the subject has recently been admirably recapitulated in a paper by my friend Mr. T. J. Moore in 'The Ibis' for last year\*. I would, however, observe that though the illustrious Pallas has the credit of first giving a *description* of this bird, he does not appear to have seen more than a single example of it, which was obtained in the Kirghis steppes by Nicolas Rytschkof, and mentioned by him in his Journal†. And of this example, judging from the figure given of it, not only, as Pallas himself says "*Cauda in specimine deerat*," but it also appears to have lost the elongated portion of the shafts of the outer remiges, which form so singular a feature in the species, and which, as we see by the state of the birds in our Gardens, are no doubt easily broken off. I must be allowed to add that I think this circumstance greatly favours the supposition that the specimens which were obtained in Western Europe in July and August 1859, were not indebted to any human interference for their transport; for I have had the good fortune to examine all four of them, and each possessed these extraordinary appendages in nearly perfect preservation.

ON A NEW SPECIES OF WATER-TORTOISE (*GEOCLEMMYS MELANOSTERNA*) FROM DARIEN. BY DR. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S., ETC.

The British Museum has just received a very distinct species of the more terrestrial kind of Terrapins, or Freshwater Tortoises, from Cherunha in the Gulf of Darien.

It is easily known from the other described species by the black colour of the upper and lower surface, and pale-yellowish sides, and the distinct bright-yellow superciliary streak on each side of the head, extending from the nostril to the occiput.

*GEOCLEMMYS MELANOSTERNA*.

Shell black, one-keeled; the first vertebral plate longer than broad, truncated behind; second and third six-sided, about as broad as long, the fourth broader than long; the keel low, rather interrupted; the areola of the dorsal and marginal shield posterior; the margin rather acute, slightly bent up in front and on the sides; the nuchal shield more distinct; the sternum flat, black, with rather paler edges to the shields; the sterno-costal slope rather convex, pale yellowish; the under surface of the marginal plates pale; the axillary plate moderate, the inguinal plate small, both pale-coloured. The head moderate, rather acute in front, black, with a distinct bright-yellow

\* The Ibis, 1860, p. 105.

† 'Kirgis-kaisazkoi Stepie, &c. St. Petersburg, 1772, p. 40.' I have not been able to see this work, and only quote the reference at second hand.--A. N.



streak diverging over the eyes and extending from the nostril to the back of the head. The legs and tail brown with black spots, forming more or less distinct streaks; toes 5·4, short, strong, subequal, covered with distinct band-like scales; the claws strong, conical, black.

*Hab.* The Gulf of Darien: Cherunha.

May 28, 1861.—Dr. J. E. Gray, V.P., in the Chair.

ON THE HABITS OF THE GORILLA AND OTHER TAILLESS LONG-ARMED APES. BY DR. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S., ETC.

Recently the habits of the Gorilla have excited considerable interest; and it has been described by some authors as a fierce and untameable animal, which, by its strength, has driven all other wild animals from its haunts.

It is to be observed that the Ourang Outan was formerly charged with all manner of iniquities, such as carrying off women and children, defending itself with clubs, clawing people up by its hind feet as they passed through the woods; but as the habits of the animal became known, these tales, found untrue, were transferred to the Gorilla or the adult Chimpanzee\*, and I believe with as little truth.

Dr. Abel's account of the Ourang of Java, copied into Griffith's 'Animal Kingdom,' vol. i. p. 239, and more recently Mr. Wallace's paper on the Habits of the Orang Utan of Borneo, published in the 'Annals and Magazine of Natural History' for 1856 (vol. xviii.), p. 26, have entirely dispelled all these delusions as regards the Ourang; though it is said that "there is no animal in the jungle so strong as he," p. 29. It is thus shown that strength is no proof of ferocity, and all the stories of the Gorilla seem based on the fact that being strong it must be very ferocious. Never was a greater fallacy.

The Chimpanzee (according to M. Du Chaillu) "is a great tree-climber, passing much of its time among the branches of the great trees of Tropical Africa. It is thoroughly untameable (?) when grown, still not fierce and malign like the *Gorilla* (?). It has never been known to attack man, and its young are tractable and easily tamed. Like its great congener, it is not gregarious."

Raffles' description of the habits of the *Siamang*, copied into Griffith's 'Animal Kingdom,' vol. i. p. 255, shows it to be a mild and inoffensive animal, capable of being "easily tamed or, rather, reconciled to bondage," but "unconquerably timid."

Duvaucel describes the Wou-Wou (*Hylobates agilis*) as living in pairs. It springs from tree to tree with wonderful agility, and can therefore be seldom taken alive; and this is the character given by all authors I have met with who have observed the various species or varieties of Gibbons alive in their native haunts.

From these accounts, and from all that I can learn of the habits of these animals from authentic sources, where there is no attempt to enhance the danger of their chase, I am induced to believe that

\* This animal exhibits an instance of how names are changed. Battle called it after the native name *Engeco*, Buffon *Engoko*, and shortened it to *Jocko*; hence *Jacko*, or *Jackey*—a name often applied to monkeys of all kinds.



all the tailless long-armed Apes, not excepting the Gorilla, are tree-living, fruit-eating animals, living where beasts of prey are not to be found, or out of their reach, if they are found together in the same locality ; so that there is no reason for them to be fierce or vicious, especially as the succulent nature of their food does not render it necessary that they should come to the earth—on which they always walk with difficulty—to obtain fluid.

At the same time I have no doubt they sometimes fight among themselves for their mates, and would defend themselves, or perhaps attack any animal—the larger kinds even man—if brought to bay, and that they would use all their force and cunning to escape from confinement, and thus try to recover their liberty ; but every animal, even the most docile and herbivorous, as the deer, antelope, &c., will do this, and might therefore as well be called vicious and untameable.

They are most, if not all, of them provided with very loud voices ; and the *Siamang* is provided with large guttural sacs, which have been supposed to facilitate the production of these sounds ; but as M. Duvaucel did not find them in the '*Wou-Wou*,' which also emits a fearfully loud voice, he infers that the bags do not affect the sound. Some of the American Monkeys are called Howlers on account of the sounds they emit, which in these animals are said to be produced by a peculiarity in the form of the larynx.

The *Ourang* and *Siamang* are seldom found far from the sea ; and I have been informed by the Gaboon traders that all the *Gorillas* they have seen have been taken near the coast.

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The following Postscript, bearing date Sept. 25, has been forwarded to us by Dr. Gray.—ED. ANN. NAT. HIST.

A missionary who has resided many years in the Gaboon states that young Gorillas are often taken by the natives, who bring them alive into the settlement, that he has had several living in his house at different times, that they were quite as tame and as tractable as the young Chimpanzees, and that he never saw them walk erect or attempt to attack any one. The natives also often bring in the dead bodies of the older ones ; for they are fond of hunting them in the forest near the sea ; and as soon as they get them, they hasten with them across the river to the settlement to sell them : they fetch a low price ; the largest which he ever saw was bought for 20 shillings, and they are generally sold for much less.

June 11, 1861.—Dr. J. E. Gray, V.P., in the Chair.

NOTICE OF A STAG FROM NORTHERN CHINA SENT BY MR. SWINHOE TO THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY. BY DR. JOHN EDWARD GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S., ETC.

Mr. Swinhoe has most kindly sent to us three examples of a Deer which were shot in the Gardens of the Summer Palace at Pekin in the winter of 1860.

There is a skin of an adult male with horns, of an adult female, and of a younger animal.

The male agrees in most particulars with the account of the *Cervus*



*pseudaxis* of Eydoux, figured by Gervais in the 'Voyage of the Bonite,' and its horns with those of the same animal figured by Dr. Pucheran in the 'Archives du Muséum' (vol. iv. t. 24. f. 2-8). The specimens having been procured in the winter, agree with the figures of the animal in that state on M. Gervais's plate.

Mr. Swinhoe thought it might be the *Cervus Wallichii* of Cuvier, but it has no affinity to that species.

It is very like a series of animals (for now we have two pairs, and they are breeding) which were received a short time ago by the Zoological Society from Japan, and which I described, under the name of *Rusa japonica*, in the 'Annals and Magazine of Natural History' for February 1861, p. 143; and in the form of the horns and in the general appearance of the animal it agrees with the *Cervus sika*, Temminck, very shortly described and figured in the 'Fauna Japonica.'

Dr. Sclater, in the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society,' has stated his opinion that my *Rusa japonica* is probably the same as *Cervus sika* and also as *Cervus pseudaxis*. But *Cervus pseudaxis* and *Rusa japonica* differ from *Cervus sika* in having a large white anal disk surrounded by a black edge, which is not represented in the figure of *Cervus sika*, nor mentioned in the short and, I own, very imperfect description of that species.

I may state that *Cervus pseudaxis* appears to be a species of the genus *Rusa* rather than *Axis*, with which I had placed it in the 'Catalogue of the Ungulated Animals in the British Museum,' p. 215; and it seems closely allied to the small species which inhabit the islands of the Indian Ocean, that form the second section of the genus *Rusa* in the catalogue above quoted; but, as in the other species of that section, we want much more materials in order to know what are and what are not species of that group.

The animal which has been figured under the name of *Cervus pseudaxis* was obtained by MM. Eydoux and Souleyet in Java, but they did not believe that it was a native of that country. It lived several years in the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, and hence a series of its horns was procured and figured; and while there it bred with the Common Axis, and the male produce was fertile (see 'Archives du Muséum,' iv. p. 421). Some naturalists have given the Sooloo Islands, near the Philippines, as the habitat of this specimen, but I do not know on what authority.

The Chinese animal seems also to be much more spotted in the winter season than its Japanese ally (*Rusa japonica*), which nearly lost its spots in the Zoological Gardens during the winter of last year.

The old male is furnished with a kind of mane; that is to say, the hair of the neck is longer and more rigid than that of the rest of the body, except just over the tail, where it is also elongated and rigid. The fur of all the three specimens is long and very close, much more so than in its Japanese ally. The male is rather paler in colour and less spotted than either of the hornless specimens; it has only an indistinct, rather darker line of rather longer hair between the withers, and it has a large blackish space of rigid, rather longer hair over the base of the tail. On the other hand, both the



hornless skins have a distinct, well-marked black dorsal streak, which is wider, more distinct, and formed of longer hair on the back of the neck; and they have only a broad, well-marked black edge on the upper surface and side of the white anal disk. The tail in all the specimens is white, with a black streak along the middle of the upper side of the base. In this respect it also agrees with *R. japonica*.

I believe that Dr. Sclater is now satisfied that the identity of my *Rusa japonica* with *Cervus sika* is very doubtful. Indeed, I cannot conceive how this can be otherwise, unless the *Cervus sika* is very badly figured and incorrectly described. We may therefore regard *Cervus sika* as a distinct species, at least until we can procure some further observations on it. It was figured and described from a single male specimen sent to Leyden.

The specimens from Northern China sent by Mr. Swinhoe (which I am inclined to think may be *Cervus pseudaxis* of Eydoux) chiefly differ from *Rusa japonica* in being of a considerably larger size, the Chinese species being as large as the Fallow Deer, and the Japanese *Rusa* considerably less—between that animal and the Roebuck.

I may state that the distinctions of the species of Stags are very difficult to describe by words; yet the allied Deer from different countries are generally to be best distinguished by their size and habitat; and that may be the case with this and the other small *Rusæ* which are described as coming from Timor, the Philippines, and Formosa.

The two skulls which accompanied the skins present a considerable difference in the form and depth of the preorbital pit: and this observation is of some importance, as the size, form, and depth of this pit has been considered by some zoologists as presenting a good specific distinction; but I have observed a similar difference in skulls of apparently the same species of the genus *Cariacus*. The skulls are not of the same age; but I do not think that this can have any effect on the form or depth of the pit. The skull of the male is of a young animal, the hinder grinder being in the course of development; and the horns are simple, without any snags, like the horn figured in 'Arch. du Mus.' vi. t. 24. f. 2, but even wanting the basal snag, and they are covered with hair. In this skull the preorbital pit is large, subtrigonal, and not quite so deep as it is wide, rounded at the base.

The skull of the female is rather larger, and belongs to an adult animal, with all the grinders well developed. In this skull the pit is oblong, not so broad as long, and very much deeper (I should say, nearly twice as deep), and has a large aperture at the hinder part of its base, evidently for the transmission of some vessel, which is not to be seen in the skull of the male.

The male skull has short canines, not produced beyond the surface of the bone; the female has the holes of smaller canines which have fallen out.

P.S.—Dr. Schlegel, the Director of the Leyden Museum, has, in reply to an application from me, sent me this day (July 11, 1861) the following note on the specimen of *C. sika* in the Leyden collection:—"If you mean by the anal disk the whitish or yellowish



disk which extends in the Common or Canada Stag above the tail, the Japanese Stag decidedly shows nothing of this kind. In this species the white colour is restricted to the abdomen, the inside of the thighs, the anal region, and the greater end part of the tail; the root of the tail is, on the contrary, of the same brown colour as the whole back and the rest of the animal."

It is probable, therefore, that the Japanese Deer described by me as *Rusa japonica* may be the same as the *Cervus sika*, though it differs so much from the figure and short description of that animal in the 'Fauna Japonica.'

### MISCELLANEOUS.

*Note on the Synonymy of the Fossil Genus Echinodon of Professor Owen.* By H. FALCONER, M.D.

*To the Editors of the Annals and Magazine of Natural History.*

GENTLEMEN,—I wish to make a correction through the medium of your pages.

In his late contribution to the Palæontographical Society, on the Purbeck *Lacertilia*, p. 35, Professor Owen erroneously cites me as the authority for the name *Sauræchinodon*, as a synonym of his *Echinodon*. It should have been *Sauræchmonon*. With the barbarism ascribed to me, doubtless inadvertently, I have no concern.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. FALCONER.

London, Sept. 1861.

### *On the Death-wound of the "King of the Gorillas."*

The following letter, addressed by Dr. Gray to the President of the Zoological Section, was read at the meeting of the British Association recently held at Manchester:—

"British Museum, Sept. 6, 1861.

"My dear Professor,—It is with much regret that I feel myself called upon to correct an error which appears in the report of Prof. Owen's paper on the Gorilla, &c., contained in 'The Times' of this day. Prof. Owen is there represented as stating that 'the skin of the great male Gorilla, now in the British Museum, exhibits two opposite wounds, the smaller in front of the left side of the chest, the larger close to the lower part of the right blade-bone. Two of the ribs in the skeleton of this animal are broken on the right side, near where the charge has passed through the skin in its course outwards.' As this would appear to offer a direct contradiction to a statement made by myself, I cannot (although labouring at present under a severe attack of illness, and writing from a sick chamber) pass it over in silence.

"My attention was called to the subject by Mr. Joseph Beck, the well-known microscopist, who first made the observation that none





1861. "Proceedings of Learned Societies." *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 8, 334–341.

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