

Higgins." Shortly afterwards I received uncoloured proofs of forty-six plates ; of these, plates lxxv. to cvii. are lettered, the remainder are unlettered : the lettering of the first eighteen informs the public that they were drawn in 1867 and published 1868 ; the nineteenth drawn 1868, published 1868 ; the twentieth and twenty-first drawn 1867, published 1868 ; the twenty-second to twenty-seventh drawn 1868, published 1868 ; the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth drawn 1868, published 1869 ; the four remaining lettered plates drawn 1868, published 1868 ; so we are to believe that thirty-one of the thirty-three plates which Felder himself calls "provisional" in August 1869 were published in 1868. So far as can be ascertained from London publishers, the part containing these plates is actually not to be had at the present time, and lepidopterists are beginning to doubt whether it will ever appear at all. When these things are considered, what must of necessity be the feeling with regard to the second part of the same work, of which British lepidopterists at least saw nothing until 1867, but which bears the date 1865 ?

MISCELLANEOUS.

Notes on Australian Freshwater Tortoises.

By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S. &c.

THE British Museum has received a series of freshwater tortoises belonging to the family Hydraspidæ, from Mr. Krefft. They are preserved in spirit, and were obtained from Burnett's River.

Chelymys macquaria.

There are six specimens, of different ages, which I believe belong to this species, in the collection. They all agree in having a lead-coloured head, with a broad white streak from the middle of the hinder part of the orbit to the upper front margin of the tympanum, and a similar rather broad streak from the angle of the mouth to the underside of the tympanum.

In general the gullet and throat below this line are white, but in some they are more or less varied with lead-colour. The thorax in all the specimens is much more oblong and convex than in the specimens received from Segou, in the Macquarie River ; but they vary both in the outline of the thorax and in the convexity of the back very considerably. The smallest is the broadest, with the back of the shell much elevated in the centre. Indeed no two of the specimens are alike in form and convexity, which induces me to believe that they all belong to one very variable species.

Elseya latisternon (Cat. Shield Rept. Suppl. p. 77).

There are two specimens in Mr. Krefft's collection received from Burnett's River. They differ from the specimens in the British Museum, which I previously described, in the underside being dark-coloured and black-dotted; and the neck of this species is spinous on the upper surface, like *Euchlemys spinosa*, but is known from it by not having any nuchal shield.

Note on Comephorus baicalensis. By Dr. ALBERT GÜNTHER, F.R.S.

The Trustees of the British Museum have lately purchased a collection of fishes from Lake Baikal, and among them four specimens of *Comephorus baicalensis*; another example has been presented by Prof. Peters. Valenciennes denies the presence of pyloric appendages (xii. p. 333); however, I find five, each from 4 to 7 millims. long. With regard to the systematic position of the fish, I still think that it should be placed among the Acanthopterygians, in the division of the *Cotto-scombriformes* (see the "Systematic Synopsis of the Families of Acanthopterygians," Catal. iii. Appendix). In some respects it resembles a Gadoid fish; but there are true spines in the first dorsal fin: the air-bladder and, consequently, a pneumatic duct are absent.

On the Embryo of Macropus major.

By H. A. PAGENSTECHER.

In the first place it may be stated, with regard to the generative organs, that Owen is perfectly right in saying that in *Macropus major* no communication at all exists between the median vaginal cæcum and the portion designated by him as the vestibule, whilst, on the contrary, *Halmaturus ruficollis* (*Bennetti*) in our collection shows a complete open communication. The vaginal vestibule contained a great quantity of thrown-off epithelium, which was accumulated in the very narrow canals of the lateral paired vaginae, the *uterus anfractuosus* of authors; the median cæcum, which had flabby walls, contained a very small quantity of a turbid fluid.

The left tube contained an embryo, although no yellow body was to be recognized in the ovary. The very vascular decidua separated pretty readily from the walls of the tube, except a few stronger vascular adhesions. The chorion had no connexion at all with the decidua, so that it slipped quite easily out of the envelope. The embryo was exactly of the size and maturity of the specimen of which Owen says that it was born thirty-eight days after copulation, and which he has figured. It was enveloped in the amnios. The length, from the snout to the extremity of the tail, was about 4 centimetres.

The amniotic peduncle contained five spiral convolutions of the intestine. With its inner surface were connected the membranes and vessels of a vesicle over 1.5 centimetre in diameter, which projected from the peduncle and was itself supported on a peduncle



Gray, John Edward. 1871. "Notes on Australian freshwater tortoises." *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 8, 291–292.

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