

10. CONTRIBUTION TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE BRITISH CHARRS. PART III. BY ALBERT GÜNTHER, M.A., PH.D., M.D., F.Z.S.

(Plate XL.)

Since the publication of my last paper on British Charrs* I have received, among other examples, a most remarkable form, which, in the excessive development of its fins, differs from all the other species known to me from Great Britain and the continent of Europe. Only *Salmo grayi* from Ireland and *S. nivalis* from Iceland approach it in the length of the pectorals; but the former cannot well be confounded with it, having much larger scales and the body compressed and rather elevated; from the latter it differs in several points of minor importance, and especially in the increased number of pyloric appendages, which, besides, are extremely narrow and slender. For specimens of this Charr I am indebted to Mr. Gould, to whom they were sent by Mr. Hanbury Barclay, and who informs me that they inhabit a very retired loch in Inverness-shire, Loch Killin, about 2000 feet above the level of the sea. They are caught only in September and October, when they approach the edge of the loch to spawn.

This Charr was already known to the late Wm. Thompson, in whose work on the Natural History of Ireland, iv. p. 164, we find the following note:—

“About fifteen miles from Loch Corr is Loch Killin, situated in the pastoral vale of Stratherrick. Three specimens of char have thence been brought me. They are remarkably different from the Loch Corr example, are of a clumsy form, have very large fins like the Welsh fish(?), and are dull in colour, of a blackish leaden hue throughout the greater part of the sides, the lower portion of which is of a dull yellow; no red appearing anywhere. So different, indeed, is this fish from the char of the neighbouring localities, that it is believed by the people resident about Loch Killin to be a species peculiar to their lake, and hence bears another name,—‘Haddy’ being strangely enough the one bestowed upon it. This fish is only taken when spawning, but then in great quantities, either with nets or a number of fish-hooks tied together, with their points directed different ways. These, unbaited, are drawn through the water, where the fish are congregated in such numbers that they are brought up impaled on the hooks. The largest of my specimens is 16 inches in length, and others of similar size were brought to my friend at the same time—on the 26th or 27th September, when about a ‘cart-load’ of them was taken. The flesh of some was white and soft. They contained ova the size of peas. On dissection my specimens were found to be male and female; externally the sex could not have been told with certainty. Their stomachs and intestines were empty. This fish bears a resemblance to the Lough Melvin char, but differs from it in some characters.”

* Proc. Zool. Soc. 1863, p. 6.





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