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The new Holland Gerboa rat (*Hapalotis albipes*, Licht.)

John Edward Gray F.R.S.

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phibious carnivorous type. I conclude, therefore, that the Dugong and its congeners must either form a group apart, or be joined, as in the classification of M. De Blainville, with the Pachyderms, with which the herbivorous *Cetacea* have the nearest affinities, and to which they seem to have been more immediately linked by the now lost genus *Deinotherium*."

Some prepared specimens belonging to the genera *Siphunculus* and *Asterias*, collected by Mr. Harvey upon the Devonshire coast, and presented to the Society, were upon the table, to which Mr. Owen drew the attention of the Meeting. The Chairman read an extract of a letter from the former gentleman, in which he stated that a considerable number of the Red-band Fish (*Cepola rubescens*) had been picked up on the beach near Teignmouth. One of these specimens sent by Mr. Harvey was exhibited by Mr. Yarrell, who observed that these fish are rarely captured, owing to their keeping very near the bottom, and their shape allowing them to pass through the meshes of the fishermen's nets. In severe storms, however, shoals of this *Cepola* are sometimes killed by being driven against the bottom, or dashed against the rocks, and are then thrown on shore dead. Mr. Yarrell remarked that he had heard of two or three instances of this kind recently occurring on the British coast.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE NEW HOLLAND GERBOA RAT (*HAPALOTIS ALBIPES*, LIGHT.) BY
JOHN EDWARD GRAY, F.R.S., &C.

The Trustees of the Museum have recently purchased of Dr. John Lhotsky a perfect specimen of the *Hapalotis albipes*, described by Professor Lichtenstein in 1827, 'Darstellung der Säugethiere,' t. 29, from a specimen sent to Berlin in 1824 by Dr. Sieber; and a second which was sent to Berlin by Dr. Lhotsky was put up for sale there on the 6th of April 1837, and bought by the Royal Museum.

Our specimen differs from that described by Prof. Lichtenstein in having the tail as long as the body, and the tip of it, which was most probably wanting in the Berlin specimen, is covered with long expanding hairs; the upper side of the tail is dark-brown, and the under side and the pencil of long hairs at the tip is white. Dr. Lichtenstein in his description says the tail is only one third the length of the body, but in his figure represents it as half the length of the body and head. The ears of our specimen are covered externally with short appressed hairs, those of the front half being brown, and

the hinder half white. M. Lichtenstein describes them as nearly naked and thin.

The thumbs of the fore feet are furnished with small blunt rudimentary claws; the hair of the back is thickly interspersed with long taper-pointed black hairs.

The cutting teeth are yellow, rounded, and without any grooves in front and shelving at the point within; the grinders are $\frac{3-3}{3-3}$; the crown of the front upper is oblong longitudinal, and furnished with three oblong transverse ridges, and three small rounded tubercles on the inner side; one opposite the inner edge of each of the larger ridges; the second upper has two oblong transverse ridges on the outer side and three small tubercles on the inner; the hinder upper has two oblong transverse ridges extending over the whole width of the tooth behind, and a small row of tubercles at the front inner angle. The front lower grinder is formed of three, rather folded, oblong, transverse ridges, the second and third tooth are each formed of only two similar ridges, the ridges of the hinder tooth and especially the hinder ridge being the smallest.

This description nearly agrees with that given by Lichtenstein, but he supposes that one of the inner rounded tubercles of the upper middle tooth belongs to the anterior one. Notwithstanding these discrepancies between the description of the Berlin animal and the one in our collection, I have no doubt that they are intended for the same species, especially as Dr. Lhotsky informs me that the one we have purchased is similar to that he sent to Berlin, which was named *Hapalotis albipes* by Lichtenstein himself in the sale catalogue p. v. lot 3.

There is a specimen called a native rabbit in Mr. Caley's collection in the Museum of the Linnæan Society, which exactly agrees with our animal in all particulars, except that its ears are naked and semitransparent as they are described by Professor Lichtenstein; but from their appearance I am inclined to believe that they have been accidentally denuded, which is very probable, as the scarf skin on the ears of our specimen appears to be very easily deciduous. The specimen in the Linnæan Society's collection has been recently described by Mr. Ogilby under the name of *Conilurus constructor*, Linn. Trans. xviii. 125, where that gentleman has given an interesting account of its habits, extracted from the notes of Major Mitchell. The general appearance of the animal so much resembles a *Gerboa*, that if it were not for the great difference in size given in Major Mitchell's sketch, I should be inclined to believe that it is the animal which this enterprising traveller has figured in his work as a species of

that genus. This animal is interesting as being the third genus of true Glirine mammals found on the Australian continent, viz. *Hydromys*, *Hapalotis*, and *Pseudomys*. Indeed the number of non-marsupial mammalia appears to be rapidly increasing as we become better acquainted with the animals of Australia. Thus I now know of three species of insectivorous bats inhabiting that continent, one belonging to a peculiar genus *Nyctophilus*, and two to *Molossus*.

NEW ANOMALOUS REPTILE.

Dr. John Natterer, the industrious collector, who has lately returned to Vienna from South America with his large collections, has published in the 'Annals of the Vienna Museum' (ii. p. 167.) under the name of *Lepidosiren paradoxa*, a new anomalous reptile, which has much the appearance of an eel, but is covered with large netted scales, and the body is furnished with four simple elongated tapering legs; the front pair being placed on the back edge of the upper part of the spiracles, and the hinder pair on the under side of the hinder part of the body. The jaws are furnished with strong truncated teeth, and the vent, which is circular and plaited, is placed on the left of the centre of the under side of the body, just behind the base of the left hind leg. It was discovered in the Brazils near the river Amazon, and grows to three feet. They had two specimens in the Vienna Museum; one of them has been put into the hands of Professor Th. Bischoff for the purpose of being dissected.—J. E. GRAY.

ON THE FUR SEAL OF COMMERCE.

In one of your last numbers there is an interesting paper, by Mr. Hamilton, on the fur seal of commerce, illustrated by a figure, which the author supposes will "enable any one at once to recognise the animal." Unfortunately, this is not the case, as from the want of details of the teeth, of a more minute description of the whiskers, ears, and various other parts which form the specific characters of these very intricate animals, we gain nothing from the paper but that the fur-seal is an *Otaria* or Eared Seal, for the colour can scarcely be considered of any importance when we know the great changes it undergoes during growth in the other species of the genus. I am induced to make these remarks in the hope of inducing Mr. Hamilton to extend his description, as I am very desirous of ascertaining if his seal is the same as that which I described some time ago in the 'Magazine of Natural History' (1837), under the name *Leptonyx Wedellii*, from two specimens which were collected by the Hon. Capt. Fitzroy, and by him presented to the British Museum.—J. E. GRAY,