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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

NEW ENGLAND ZOÖLOGICAL CLUB

ANOTHER BAHAMIAN FRESH-WATER TORTOISE

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THIS summer two young members of the staff of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy decided to visit Great Inagua, to make general zoölogical collections. Mr. Richard A. McLean was especially interested in molluscs, while his colleague, Mr. Benjamin Shreve, occupied himself principally with the reptiles. The latter secured a fine collection, which he will study during the coming months, but he has kindly consented to our describing now this interesting novelty. By good fortune the junior author was in Cambridge when these tortoises arrived, having come here especially to study the Antillean tortoises in the collection.

It was His Honor, J. V. Malone, Esq., the Commissioner for the Island of Inagua and an old and valued friend of many members of the Museum staff, who informed McLean and Shreve of the existence of the tortoise, took them on two occasions to the ponds where they occur, and aided them in getting the excellent series which they brought back to Cambridge.

The tortoise is apparently confined to three small fresh-water ponds in the scrub back of Man of War Bay and near Northwest Point.

The ponds are perhaps but little more than one hundred by two hundred feet in extent, and from two to three feet deep. Depth and area are naturally somewhat dependent upon rainfall, but they are apparently permanent. The population of tortoises is very small, and it was only after considerable effort that a series was caught.

It is naturally a great pleasure to associate Mr. Malone's name with this most interesting and significant novelty, concerning which we should probably have known nothing, had it not been for him.

Pseudemys malonei sp. nov.

Type: Mus. Comp. Zoöl., 44,338, a full grown female (length 238 mm., width 176 mm., height 103 mm.), from ponds near Northwest Point, Great Inagua Island, B.W.I., collected by Malone, McLean and Shreve, July, 1938.

Diagnosis: Readily distinguished from the other forms of the *palustris* group by the following combination of characters. A groove and a conspicuous dark bar extending vertically from a deep notch at the maxillary symphysis; anterior face of maxilla concave beneath anterior margin of orbit. Plastral markings, if present, extending to anterior edge of gulars, and over onto the narrow projecting shelf formed by the upper surface of the gulars. Snout long and deep in the male, retreating ventrally, the tip upturned. Carapace very high in adults, its sides steeply inclined and nearly straight in female; its greatest width near middle (at marginal suture six or on the anterior half of seventh marginal). Carapace dark gray or grayish black; ground color of soft parts slate-gray; stripes white or light cream, supratemporals brown or lacking in preserved specimens.

Most closely related to *P. stejnegeri* Schmidt, from which the shape and extreme height of the carapace and the ground color of the carapace and soft parts distinguish it. Average length: height ratios, females: *malonei* 2.36; *stejnegeri*, 2.42.

Mus. Comp. Zoöl. 44,333 is an excellent example of the extreme melanistic or 'rugosa' condition seen in most old males of the group. The lamellae of the posterior half of the carapace are opaque and heavily pigmented with black, while those covering the anterior portion are clear and translucent, with pigment only along the sutures. The plastron is yellow with black sutural borders, and the head and leg stripes have been replaced by gray and white mottling.

The type series comprises eleven specimens, the type, the male allotype (Mus. Comp. Zoöl., 44,339), and nine paratypes (Mus. Comp. Zoöl. 44,340-44,348), all with the same data as the type.