Genus HERONA, Westw.


Notes on Birds.
Part IX.

In the “Journal of the Straits Branch of the R. A. S. for August 1895, p. 96,” I described a new species of Philentoma under the name Philentoma maxwelli, from a specimen in the Museum which still remains unique.

During my last visit (April 1896) to the 1st Stage on the Penrissen road, one of the Dyak collectors procured a very interesting new species of this genus which I propose to call Philentoma saravakensis. N. Sp.

This makes the fourth species of the genus, now known to science.

Male.—General colour slaty blue; forehead and lores lighter than the back; long feathers on the rump dark grey tinged with blue with pale grey bases; long feathers on the sides and flanks of body dark grey with nearly pure white bases; under tail—coverts grey with darker centres; wings and tail above like the back, the inner webs and under—sides of both nearly black; thighs slaty blue. Bill and legs black; iris nearly black. Length 6 6½; wing 3 20; tail 3 0; culmen 0 70; tarsus 0 65.

While examining the specimens of Philentoma velatum, I discovered a second example of this new bird, it was labeled as a female of P. velatum; it is evidently a male of the same age as the one I procured although the sex is not marked.

Notes on Tortoises.
No. 4.
By EDWARD BATLETT.
Bailey’s Water-Tortoise.

In my notes on this fine large new species of water-tortoise, I pointed out that it appeared to me so distinct from all the known genera that it might eventually be raised to a separate genus; its position in the general arrangement of the Testudinidae will be between Camallurg and Hardella to both of which it is nearly allied.

Owing to the importance of the discovery of such a large species of tortoise in this country, I have much pleasure in naming the genus after His Highness The Rajah of Sarawak.

Brookein, Gen. Nov.


The elongated depressed carapace, covered with smooth epidermal shields without indication of a keel, the large shield on the crown of the head, temporal plates, small nuchal shields and the large black eye, distinguish it from all other genera. The tail very much shorter in the female than in the male.

The collection contains three males and three females of which I give the dimensions:

1.—Male. Length 24 inches, breadth 16½ in., depth 8 in.
2.—Male. Length 25½ inches, breadth 16½ in., depth 9 in.

3.—Male. Length 27 inches, breadth 16½ in., depth 8½ in.
4.—Female. Length 18½ inches, breadth 12 in., depth 7½ in.
5.—Female. Length 18 inches, breadth 12 in., depth 3 in.
6.—Female. Length 17½ inches, breadth 11½ in., depth 6 in.

The egg is oblong with very thick shell and white; it resembles very closely that of Callagur picta, but is very much narrower.

The food is vegetable substance; one contained a large mass of leaves and a very hard jungle fruit; another the stems of a coarse grass something similar to latang, there were cut by its mandibles to a length of 1½ inches.

This tortoise appears to inhabit the lakes and swampy jungle of the Ulu Datang Lopar river, Sarawak.

Geeomys spinosa (Gray).
Spinosus Land-Emys.

On further examination of this tortoise I have come to the conclusion that it deposits but one egg at a time.

The four females which I have opened contained but one perfectly developed egg the rest were either half, or partly developed.

Inquests.

Inquest held at the Mortuary on 22nd instant at 3 p. m. on the body of a Chinaman Lim Ju Chua found in the river this day.

Jury.—Ngee Siang, Poremai, Lew Ah Lek, Siang Hek, Luong Lee, Lim Hong, Inche Omar, Biap Hong, Haji Rasul.

The Inspector of Police states that at 9 p. m. on Wednesday Lim Au Chin reported at the Police Station that his son Lim Ah Jin had seen deceased run out the house in Gambier road and go in the direction of the Fish market and then disappear. Deceased is subject to epileptic fits. A search was made for deceased but he was not found. At 10.30 this morning the body was found floating near the Mosque by Daud and Taha, the latter a tambangman No. 7, and the body has been identified by Lim Ah Chin as his relative.

The jury having viewed the body.

Lim Ah Jin states that deceased was ill and he went to his house to see after him. He met him in the road and asked him what was the matter, he did not answer, but ran to the Fish market and jumped into the river. He was not able to catch hold of him. There was no one about at the time so he went and told his father who reported the occurrence at the Police Station.

22nd May, 1896.

I hereby certify that I have viewed body of a Chinaman in Mortuary; it is in such a state of decomposition as to prevent accuracy but in my opinion death was due to drowning.

The Coroner,
Kuching.

The jury are of the opinion that deceased committed suicide whilst in an unsound state of mind.

22nd May, 1896.

Inquest held at the Mortuary on 25th instant at 9 a.m. on the body of Chinaman Bong Kieu, of S'go-bang.