

long as the suture between the parietals; no præocular. Body much elongate, of equal thickness throughout. Scales in thirteen rows. Ventral plates 211; subcaudals 22. Plumbeous; back with longitudinal lines of light dots; upper lip yellowish (in spirit); side of the anterior fourth of the body with a series of large yellowish spots; a few other such spots on the tail and a cross band of the same colour above the vent.

Total length 265 millim.; diameter of body 5.

A single specimen was obtained on the Rejang River, Sarawak, and presented to the Natural-History Museum by Brooke Low, Esq.

I seize this opportunity to observe that *Elaphis Grabowskyi*, Fischer, from S.E. Borneo, of which the type specimens are now in the Museum, is identical with *E. tenuirus*, Cope. The characters pointed out by Dr. Fischer as distinguishing his new species from *E. tenuirus*, with which he correctly compares it, are individual variations. I will merely remark that we have specimens from Pekin with nine or even ten upper labials. The range of this snake, originally described from Ningpo and Siam, is an exceptionally extensive one. In addition to the Bornean specimens just mentioned the species is represented in the Natural-History Museum from the following localities:—Chikiang (*Fortune*), Shanghai (*Swinhoe*), Pekin (*Bushell*), Darjeeling (*Jerdon*), and Pajo, Sumatra (*Bock*).

## XXII.—On a new Family of Pleurodiran Turtles.

By G. A. BOULENGER.

A RECENT number of the 'Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales' (2nd ser. vol. i. 1886) contains the description, by Mr. E. P. Ramsay, of a new freshwater turtle from the Fly River, New Guinea, which is one of the most striking discoveries made in recent herpetology during the past twenty years. Unfortunately the author does not dwell sufficiently upon the systematic position of his new genus, to which the name *Carettochelys* is given; and his comparison with *Emyda* and his remark that it appears to be a link between the river- and the sea-turtles are merely based on

superficial resemblance. Although all I know of the animal is derived from Mr. Ramsay's description and figures, yet I think that a few words as to its systematic position will usefully supplement that interesting contribution.

We may first assume that *Carettochelys* is a Pleurodiran. To say nothing of its habitat (all Papuanian and Australian Chelonians belonging to that division), the tendency of the neural bones to disappear altogether and the numerous band-like plates on the fore limbs are highly suggestive of such affinity. By "head non-retractile" I understand the author to mean that the animal is a Pleurodiran; but not a word is said of the attachment of the pelvis, and the absence of epidermic scutes deprives us of the well-known criterion afforded by the azygogular plate. Then we see that it differs from all recent Chelonians (save the Trionychidæ, from which it is well distinguished, besides being a Pleurodiran, by the structure of the plastron) by the absence of epidermic scutes on the shell. It differs also from all freshwater turtles by the structure of the limbs, which form regular paddles, as in the marine turtles, and which have likewise only the two inner digits clawed. This of course is mere adaptive similarity, and implies no affinity whatever with the Chelonidæ. Although *Carettochelys* stands alone among recent non-Trionychoid Chelonians in the absence of epidermic scutes, it agrees in this respect with the Tertiary Cryptodiran genera *Anostira*, *Hallow.*, and *Pseudotrionyx*, Dollo\*. And although the limbs of the latter are still unknown we may provisionally, taking the shell only into consideration, surmise that *Carettochelys* holds in the Pleurodiran series pretty nearly the place held by these extinct types in the Cryptodiran series. Whatever this hypothesis be worth, the new genus deserves to rank as the type of a new family of Pleurodira, which may be characterized as follows:—

#### Carettochelyidæ.

Limbs paddle-shaped, the anterior much elongate; only the first and second digits clawed. No epidermic scutes on

\* It is intentionally that I abstain from mentioning *Apholidemys*, Pomel (Arch. Sc. Phys. et Nat. Genève, iv. 1847, p. 328), referred by Cope to the Emydidæ. Pomel characterizes it as a Chelonian with the carapace of an *Emys*, but devoid of scales, and the plastron of a *Trionyx*. The genus is afterwards referred by Gervais to *Trionyx*. As it stands at present, however, *Apholidemys* is hardly more than a *nomen nudum*.

the carapace and plastron. Plastron formed of the normal nine bones \*, without persisting fontanelles.

XXIII.—*Descriptions of new South-American Characinoid Fishes.* By G. A. BOULENGER.

*Curimatus hypostoma.*

D. 11 (I. 10). A. 9 (I. 8). V. 9. L. lat. 49-52.  
L. transv.  $\frac{8}{8}$ .

The height of the body equals or slightly exceeds the length of the head, and is contained four times in the total length (without caudal). Abdomen flattened in front of and behind the ventrals. Snout as long as the diameter of the eye, strongly projecting beyond the mouth, flattened inferiorly; the diameter of the eye is contained thrice and one third to thrice and two thirds in the length of the head; a much developed adipose eyelid in front and behind. Caudal fin deeply forked, a little longer than the head. The height of the dorsal is a little less than the length of the head; its origin is midway between the end of the snout and the adipose fin, corresponding to the tenth to twelfth scale of the lateral line. Extremity of pectorals separated from base of ventrals by a length of three or four scales; ventrals not reaching the vent. Scales with their entire margin conspicuously serrated. Uniform silvery, back darker and with bluish reflections; lower caudal rays darker.

Total length 120 millim.

Four specimens; from the Ucayali River, collected by Mr. W. Davis; presented by Messrs. Veitch.

Allied to *C. asper*, Gthr., and *C. trachystethus*, Cope; but the body is much less elevated in this species, which even surpasses *C. albula*, Gthr., in the strongly projecting snout.

*Tetragonopterus Iheringii.*

D. 2/8. A. 3/16-18. L. lat. 35-37. L. transv.  $\frac{5-5\frac{1}{2}}{3-4}$ .

Lateral line complete. The greatest depth of the body is contained twice and two thirds to thrice in the total length

\* I think it may be taken for granted that there are no intersternals, and that the triangular shield represented on pl. iii. is merely part of the marginal, the plastron having been sawed off.