

# NOVITATES ZOOLOGICAE.

A Journal of Zoology

*IN CONNECTION WITH THE TRING MUSEUM.*

EDITED BY

THE HON. WALTER ROTHSCHILD, PH.D.,  
ERNST HARTERT, AND DR. K. JORDAN.

VOL. IX., 1902.

*(WITH TWENTY-EIGHT PLATES.)*



ISSUED AT THE ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM, TRING.

PRINTED BY HAZELL, WATSON & VINEY, LD., LONDON AND AYLESBURY.

1902.

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF GIGANTIC LAND-TORTOISE FROM THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS.

By THE HON. WALTER ROTHSCILD, Ph.D.

THE specimen on which this species is founded formed part of the famous museum of Mr. Bullock, and is mentioned on page 101 of the catalogue as the "Indian Tortoise" (*Testudo indica*). It consists of a carapace and plastron with epidermal scutes. This specimen was purchased at the Bullock sale by the late Mr. Wallace, and passed into the Tring Museum on the dispersal of the museum of the latter at Distington, Cumberland.

*Testudo wallacei* sp. nov.

This species belongs to the section including *Testudo vicina*—i.e. the section with *non-saddle-shaped* carapaces, but seems to be nearer related in other respects to *Testudo galapagensis* of Charles Island than any other; from the latter it differs at first sight by its greater depth, much narrower anterior portion of carapace, convex marginal plates, and being strongly declivous in front. The last vertebral plate at its anterior portion is convex and the centre flat, while in *T. galapagensis* the anterior portion of this plate is concave and the centre convex. The caudal plate of the new species is also somewhat different in proportion, being 5.25 in. wide by 3.75 in. high; while in *T. galapagensis* it is 6.375 in. wide by 4.825 in. high. The costal scutes in *T. wallacei* are also more convex. The praegular scutes in the plastron of *T. wallacei* are much longer and the praecandals much shorter than the same scutes in *T. galapagensis*; also the end of the plastron is much wider and less recurved than in *galapagensis*. Total length in straight line, 32.25 in.

From the fact that between 1800 and 1835 most of the giant tortoises were got on James and Chatham Islands, and that Captain Porter says the James Island ones were round, I am of opinion that this carapace is the only existing specimen of the extinct Chatham Island species.

---