A NEW SPECIES OF GIANT TORTOISE.

By the Hon. WALTER ROTHCHILD, Ph.D.

Testudo gouffiéi.

This tortoise is at once distinguishable from gigantea and its subspecies, daudini and soumairei, which form this group of the genus Testudo, by its much more elevated carapace, which is also more declivous in front, much larger scutes, and squarer front edge to the carapace.

But the most prominent and easily perceived distinctive character is the development of the scutes on the forelegs and hind part of head. On the legs the scutes are raised and protrude separately, almost as prominently as in T. calcarata of Abyssinia. On the head the scutes, instead of being sunk in the skin, stand out like flattened knobs. These characters were even more apparent when the animal was alive. There is a double nuchal plate. Candal and marginal plates behind somewhat recurved, thus approaching those of T. daudini.

Skull considerably smaller than in an individual of T. gigantea of similar size. Central alveola on ridges of upper jaw much closer at the front of jaw, 12 mm. apart, as opposed to 15 mm. The front margin of intermaxillaries does not project as far as in T. gigantea, so that the nasal opening does not slope so obliquely. Palatal region less concave than in gigantea, and the central ridge more pronounced. Edges of pterygoid much contracted posteriorly, while in T. gigantea they run almost parallel. The inner edges of the alveolar surface do not meet at the anterior extremity of the vomer, and form a short broad isosceles triangle between that and the foramina palatina, while in T. gigantea these edges meet and form a long narrow triangle. In this new species the basi-occipital is much raised above the ex-occipital owing to the deep concavity of the latter, while in T. gigantea it is almost in the same plane. The posterior lateral portions of the pterygoid which join the quadrate are strongly concave, and sunk much below the posterior portion of the sharp edge of the pterygoid, while in T. gigantea these portions are almost flat, and are level with the sharp edge of the pterygoid.

**Skull:**

Greatest width, T. gouffiéi: 4 1/2 inches = 114 mm.

T. gigantea: 4 1/2 inches = 114 mm.

Length to end of basi-occipital, T. gouffiéi: 5 1/2 inches = 149 mm.

T. gigantea: 6 1/2 inches = 158 mm.

Lower jaw length, T. gouffiéi: 3 3/8 inches = 96 mm.

4 5/8 inches = 103 mm.

T. gigantea: 4 1/4 inches = 104 mm.

4 inches = 102 mm.

**Scutes:**

1st vertebral 10 × 12 1/2 inches = 253 × 318 mm.

2nd 9 1/2 × 15 1/2 = 240 × 304

1st costal 14 × 13 1/2 = 351 × 343

Supra-candal 11 × 13 = 279 × 330

Candal 5 × 10 = 127 × 253

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NOTES ON BIRDS FROM N.W. AUSTRALIA.

By ERNST HARTERT, Ph.D.

(Plate 1.)

Amytornis woodwardi Hart.

(Plate 1. fig. 1, § ad.)

In Nov. Zool. 1905, p. 225, I mentioned a series of a bird under the name Amytornis housei. Mr. Bernard Woodward, curator of the Perth Museum, has now kindly sent me a specimen of the true A. housei, and I find it quite distinct from our series. I therefore described the birds from the Alligator River, Arnhem Land, under the name of Amytornis woodwardi, in honour of Mr. Woodward (Bull. B. O. Club xvi. p. 30, November 1905). In Amyt. housei, originally described as Amytis housei (Rep. Kimberley Exped., App. B, 1902) the tail is much shorter (in the specimen before me 91 mm., against 106 to 114 in A. woodwardi), the throat is striated with black and white, each feather being white with black margins, the malar region similarly marked, the chest, breast and abdomen are light chestnut, the former only being slightly marked with buff shaft-lines, the vent and under tail-coverts blackish with rufous shafts, and the upper wing-coverts chestnut with whitish shaft-lines. In other respects A. housei is much like A. woodwardi (cf. Bull. B. O. Club xvi. pp. 30, 31).

Amytis housei is well figured on Pl. XII, Ema iv.

The generic name of these peculiar little birds has been rather unlucky. They were named Amytis by Lesson in 1851, but as this name had been preoccupied by Savigny in 1826 for a genus of worms, Stejneger in 1885 created the name Amytornis, which fact being overlooked by Oberholser, this author made another substitute for Amytis, namely Diaphorillas, in 1899.

In 1901 Mr. Milligan described a new species under the name gigantura. This name was changed first for megalura and then for megalurus by Sharpe (Zoological Record for 1901, p. 68, and Hand-list iv. p. 246) under the belief that gigantura was a "vox hybrida." Fortunately, however, the original name is composed of two genuine pure Greek words, and "megalura" as well as "megalurus" are therefore under any circumstances useless synonyms. The fear of Mr. Milligan (cf. Victorian Naturalist xx. p. 138) that Dr. Sharpe "forestalled" him with his name megalurus is of course unfounded!