

W. B. Bar

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES
OF PHILADELPHIA.
1858.

January 5, 1858.

DR. RUSCHENBERGER, in the Chair.

Thirty-two members present.

Mr. Slack presented for publication in the Proceedings a paper entitled "Catalogue and Notes on the Egyptian Antiquities in the collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, by J. H. Slack," which was referred to a committee.

Dr. Uhler exhibited a specimen of nitre which had occurred spontaneously in large quantity, upon the wall of a dwelling formerly used as a stable. It was remarkable for its purity, being free from lime, ammonia, magnesia and nitrate of soda.

Mr. Cassin called attention to the specimen of *Falco polyagrus*, presented this evening by Mr. J. D. Sergeant, who had obtained it east of the Mississippi. Mr. Cassin had described the species from a specimen brought from Oregon by Mr. Townsend, but the present specimen was the first he had known to be found east of the Rocky Mountains.

January 12th.

Vice-President LEA in the Chair.

Thirty-four members present.

Dr. Leidy exhibited two plates of *Urnatella gracilis*, formerly described by him in the Proceedings. He said the stomachs of these animals contained certain voluntarily moving bodies which he had supposed to be parasites, but which might prove to be generative bodies. Mr. Lea had recently given him a *Unio* from the Scioto, upon which this species of *Urnatella* had been detected—the former specimens were from the Schuylkill.

Dr. Leidy announced the return from Nebraska Territory of Dr. F. V. Hayden, bringing an important collection of fossils, among which were a number of mammalian remains from a supposed pliocene deposit, of the Niobrara River, (L'eau-qui-court.)

January 19th.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Forty-three members present.

situated more in advance than in the species just alluded to, the same sexes being compared.

Loc.—Indianola, Texas; collected by John H. Clark, under Col. J. D. Graham.

22. *ANGUILLA TYRANNUS*.—Head depressed; anterior third of body subcylindrical, somewhat deeper than wide, compressed upon the rest of the length. Lower jaw the longest; gape of the mouth nearly horizontal, its angle corresponding to a vertical line drawn inwardly to the posterior rim of the orbit. Eye well developed and circular. Teeth small, conical, disposed upon a longitudinal band on either jaw and along the vomer also. Origin of dorsal fin corresponding to the exterior third of the total length; the origin of the anal fin being placed somewhat anteriorly to the middle of the entire length. Scales narrow, elongated, cellular in structure, disposed in small groups, in which the longitudinal diameter of the scale assumes every possible direction.

Loc.—Mouth of the Rio Grande del Norte (Rio Bravo); a specimen collected by John H. Clark, under Major Emory.

VIII. *NEOMURÆNA*.—Neither pectoral nor ventral fins; dorsal and anal low, uniting posteriorly into a point; anterior maxillar teeth largest. One longitudinal series of vomerine teeth. Gill apertures lateral and subcircular.

23. *NEOMURÆNA NIGROMARGINATA*.—Head subconical; body compressed, and tapering into a point. Mouth deeply cleft; jaws equal; its gape nearly horizontal, and its angles extending considerably beyond the orbit. Origin of dorsal fin situated anteriorly to the branchial apertures, which are subcircular and rather small. The vent is placed anterior to the middle of the total length, where the anal fin is reduced to a mere membranous ridge.

Loc.—Collected at St. Joseph's Island, Texas, by G. Wurdemann.

NEOCONGER.—Pectoral fins present; dorsal and anal mostly reduced to a membranous ridge, uniting with the caudal where they are better developed. Snout tapering; lower jaw shorter than the upper; maxillar teeth exiguous, disposed upon multiple series. A patch of similar teeth on the front of the vomer, and one series along its median line. Gill apertures lateral, rather large and vertical.

24. *NEOCONGER MUCRONATUS*.—The head is small, slender, narrow and pointed; the upper jaw protruding beyond the lower. Gape of mouth horizontal; its angles extending beyond the orbits. Eyes very small, subelliptical. Vent situated somewhat nearer the extremity of the snout than the posterior edge of the caudal fin. Origin of dorsal placed a little way in advance of the vent, and like the anal, it constitutes a mere membranous ridge until about an inch and a half from the posterior extremity of the body, where it expands, fin-like, and unites with the anal.

Loc.—St. Joseph's Island, Texas. Specimens collected by G. Wurdemann.

August 24th.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Twenty-six members present.

A paper was presented for publication in the Proceedings entitled, "Mineralogical Notes, by W. J. Taylor."

Dr. Leidy made the following remarks: In the 5th volume of the Proceedings I have described a species of terrestrial planaria (*Rhynchodemus sylvaticus*), discovered in the neighborhood of this city. This singular animal is exceedingly rare. I have sought for it in many localities without having found specimens. In the 1858.]

spring of 1857, I examined damp forests in the neighborhood of Wilmington, North Carolina, and Charleston, South Carolina, without detecting it. In August, of 1857, while seeking salamanders and helices, in company with Dr. Wilson and Mr. Conrad, on the summit of Broad Top Mountain, of the Alleghany range, in western Pennsylvania, I found one specimen. Last month, while on a visit to our fellow member, Mr. S. Powel, at Newport, R. I., one damp morning I observed two fine specimens of the planaria, creeping near the top of a fence 8 feet in height. On the night of the same day, at the proposal of Mr. Powel, by the light of a lantern, we sought for the animal about the fence surrounding his grounds, and in the course of an hour we found twelve fine specimens. They were obtained from all parts of the fence, some on the top, and others on the ground.

Eight of them I have preserved alive, and now have them at my residence, living in a glass box beneath some fragments of moist wood. Occasionally I feed them on a crushed house-fly, which they appear to enjoy, as they suck at it with their protruded oesophagus for an hour at a time.

They are from 5 to 7 lines long, and creep about like the slug, with their snout-like head erect. They are light-ash colored, with a blackish streak down each side of the back, and a blackish spot just back of the middle, corresponding in position below with the mouth. In form they are like an awl split in its length, the narrower end forming the head. At the base of the latter is a pair of prominent black eyes. The lateral borders of the head are often inflected, and the head itself is sometimes, in a state of rest, doubled upon the back. The intestine presents the same dendritic arrangement as in the true fluviatile planarie.

Dr. Meigs made some remarks touching the importance of obtaining statistics regarding the actual condition of Craniological collections, with a view to establish a system of exchanges.

August 31st.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Twenty-seven members present.

The following paper was ordered to be printed in the Proceedings :

Mineralogical Notes.

BY W. J. TAYLOR.

Lecontite.

This new and interesting mineral is remarkable as being a double sulphate of ammonia and soda with potash, containing two equivalents of water, and yet homœomorphous with the group of the anhydrous sulphates, and with Mascagnine, which contains but one equivalent of water. According to Prof. Dana (System. Mineralogy, p. 379), the formula for Mascagnine is $RO, SO_3 + 2 HO$, but this is a typographical error; the proper formula for this mineral being $RO, SO_3 + HO$, as will be seen in Sixth Supplement to Mineralogy by Prof. Dana. Lecontite and Mascagnine are consequently homœomorphous, its difference in angle being about four degrees, (Lecontite, $I: I = 103^\circ 12'$, $O: I = 117^\circ 7'$; Mascagnine, $I: I = 107^\circ 40'$, $O: I = 122^\circ 56'$.) and yet the one contains two equivalents of water and the other but one. Prof. Dana has very kindly made the annexed measurements of two crystals, which I sent to him soon after receiving the mineral from Dr. Le Conte, which measurements I made the substance of a verbal communication to the Academy, on the evening of the 16th of February, but owing to a mistake, it did not appear in print (though it is recorded in the minutes of that meeting) before the May number of the Academy's Proceedings. It was at this time supposed to be a new mineral, from the difference in angle found by Prof. Dana between it and other homœomorphous sulphates; and by a qualitative analysis that I made,

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