

II. Mittheilungen aus Museen, Instituten etc.

Zoological Society of London.

15th February, 1898.—The Secretary read a report on the additions that had been made to the Society's Menagerie during the month of January 1898.—A letter was read from Mr. Dudley le Souëf, of Melbourne, containing a summary of some observations on the transfer by the mother of an embryo Kangaroo (*Macropus giganteus*) by her mouth into her pouch.—A report was read, drawn up by Mr. A. Thomson, the Society's Head-Keeper, on the insects exhibited in the Insect-house during the year 1897, and a series of the specimens was exhibited.—The Secretary exhibited a series of specimens of Butterflies, which had formed part of a collection lately on view at the Dunthorne Gallery, in illustration of the mode of mounting employed in "Denton's Patent Butterfly Tablets".—Mr. W. P. Pycraft read the first of a series of contributions to the Osteology of Birds. The present part (of which the following is an abstract) related to the Steganopodes:—

"The fact that in the Tropic-birds, Cormorants, Gannets, and Frigate-birds all the toes are united by a common web, has led to the belief that these forms are closely related; they form the suborder *Steganopodes* or *Totipalmatae* of authors.

"A comparison of the Osteology of the group confirms this opinion. *Phalacrocorax* may be taken as the type of the suborder, which may be divided into three sections according to the form of the basitemporal plate. In *Phalacrocorax* and *Plotus* this is seen in its most generalized form, and agrees with that of the Ciconiæ, *Sula* is the nearest ally of the Cormorants, as is shown by the close resemblance in the form of the fused palatines, and of the pectoral and pelvic girdles and limbs. *Sula*, it is evident by the form of the basitemporal plate, leads to *Fregata*. The Peleicans resemble the Cormorants and Gannets in the form of the palatines—which are, however, more highly modified than in these families—as also of the sternum, lachrymal, and nasal hinge. *Phaëthon* is the most aberrant of the group, but agrees most nearly with the Peleicans in the form of the basitemporal plate, which differs from that of the preceding families. Its sternum, though distinctly Steganopodous, differs in that the free end of the clavicle does not articulate with the coracoid by a flattened facet. *Phalacrocorax*, it is contended, must be regarded as the typical Steganopod. *Sula* and *Fregata* fall into places on the one side, *Pelecanus* and *Phaëthon* on the other side of this Family. *Phaëthon* and *Fregata* represent the two extremes of the suborder; they alone retain the vomer, and in them the modification of the palatines and of the maxillo-palatine processes is comparatively slight."

Dr. W. G. Ridewood, F.Z.S., read a paper on the Skeleton of Regenerated Limbs of the Midwife-Toad (*Alytes obstetricans*). He demonstrated the possibility of the development, in the regenerated hind limb of the larva, of tarsal, metatarsal, and phalangeal cartilages identical in every respect with those of the normal limb.—Mr. G. A. Boulenger, F.R.S., described a new species of Sea-Snake from Borneo, which he proposed to name *Hydrophis Floweri*, after Mr. Stanley Flower, its discoverer.—Mr. Boulenger also gave an account of the Reptiles and Batrachians lately collected by Mr. W. F. H. Rosenberg in Western Ecuador. Seventy-seven species were enumerated, of which 23, viz. 11 Reptiles and 12 Batrachians, were described as new.—P. L. Selater, Secretary.

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