

seen a panther and that it was supposed to be lying up in the grass close by. We ridiculed this idea but, as the men persisted, walked into the grass and found the panther right enough, crouching full length under a small bush, not more than 10 paces from where we had been discussing him. He held his head close to the ground, was in fact in the position of a cat about to pounce on its prey, and was staring hard, but made neither sound nor movement before the ball reached him. Though not a big animal (he measured $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet between upright sticks) he was, to judge by his fangs, quite a full grown male. He was exceptionally fat and heavy for an animal of his size.

The question which occurred to us naturally was how such a cute animal as a panther could have remained in such insufficient cover when he was discovered by the beaters, one of which stated that he nearly hit the panther with his bamboo. More strange still was that all the subsequent shouting and talking close to him failed to move him.

BOMBAY,
17th March 1923.

S. HANHART.

No. III.—A PORCUPINE-PANTHER INCIDENT.

It might interest members to know that, while a panther was drinking water the other night a porcupine arrived and wished to have a drink also. The pool, being a very small one, did not afford elbow room for both, and the porcupine, in his stilted manner, walked round to the rear of the panther and attacked it. The panther sprang over the pool and continued to lap up water. As this did not suit the views of the porcupine he went round to renew the attack, but on this occasion the panther would not wait, but made off.

There were two people watching and one is positive that, in attacking, the porcupine turned round and backed into the panther. The other one is not sure. My experience is that porcupines turn round and charge.

What is the fact ?

TONK RAJ, RAJPUTANA,
26th May 1923.

E. T. FERGUSON.

[The porcupine's methods of attack have been previously commented upon in the Society's Journal (*Vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 282-283). The offensive tactics adopted by the animal would appear to be a quick *backward* rush in the direct on of his objective with the purpose of establishing contact with his formidable battery of sharp pointed quills. The theory that porcupines are able to "shoot" their quills can be disregarded.—EDS.]

No. IV.—THE MISHMI TAKIN (*BUDORCAS TAXICOLOR*).

I saw a herd of Takin in this district in an uninhabited valley forming a dividing line between the Digaru Mishmis and the Chulikatta Mishmis. The range bounding the eastern side of the valley rises in peaks to 9,620'. The western side of the end nearest the plains is very precipitous. The Takin seem to wander in the dense evergreen forest on the precipitous western side. The rainfall varies from 400" to 150" at least. From their track they would seem seldom to come below 3 or 4,000' but would seem to be equally at home in the dense tropical evergreen at this elevation as in the rhododendrons and bamboos at

8 and 9,000'. They probably keep higher in the rains and come down in the cold weather.

Any place where a herd has halted is marked for years afterwards by their barking the trees by rubbing the thick base of their horns against them. The shape of the head looks very like that of a gaur on a smaller scale, except that it is of course narrower at the base of the horns. They have a wide flat nose like a cow's rather than a goat's. Their droppings are also the same as a cow's rather than a goat's. The build and shape of the body reminds one very much of a pig. If viewed from a distance, end on, their rolling gait reminds one of a bear.

There were 33 in the salt lick where I went to shoot them. One large herd of 29 and a smaller one of 4. The large herd was led by an old male who was lying down below the main part of the herd and, on spotting us and getting the wind of a man I had sent to close the other path out of the salt lick, he took his herd away and got to the path before it could be closed. Their sight is bad, that is, like most herbivorous animals, they cannot determine what a distant object is without long practice or being assisted by scent. According to the Mishmis, who have been hunting them for years, their sense of scent is very keen. A small fire lighted in a valley below them 2 or 3 miles away is said to drive them out of the valley.

Contrary to Capt. Bailey's experience, the herd I went after went right away after they saw us and I could not get them again though I spent two days trying to do so.

The adult animals here were all dun coloured on the withers, neck, and down the back, passing to black on the hind quarters. The young were all black; young males not quite full grown were reddish-brown in front and black behind horns as per Capt. Bailey's plates and description on pages 1069 to 1071 of Vol. XXI of the Society's Journal. I only took measurements of one of the cows I shot, I give them below. They agree with Capt. Bailey's rather than with those given in Blanford.

Female.

Length, nose to root of tail (between uprights)	5' 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
Height, shoulder to heel.. ..	3' 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Girth, forearm	16 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
Girth at back of shoulder	5' 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
Horns	14 $\frac{1}{2}$ " \times 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Skull	16" \times 7"
Tail, not measured, about	3"—4".

SADIYA, ASSAM,
7th December 1922.

H. L. COOPER.

[Commenting on the above note, Mr. J. P. Mills writes: "I consider it very interesting that Takin should have been found on a range which only goes up to 9,620,' and that they are quite at home at 3,000—4,000'. This means that the Saramatti Range between here and Burma must contain ample ground high enough for Takin. The horns I got in a deserted Kuki village in April 1918 may well have come from there (*vide* Journ. B. N. H. S., Vol. XXVI, p. 24, *ibid*, Kingdom Ward, p. 838). The old objection was that there was not enough high ground for them there and so I could never rid my mind of a feeling that the horns may have been got by the Kuki owner from some Naga, who in turn got them from another Naga who went on the Abor Expedition. Though we shall not know for certain till the country is explored, I feel much more optimistic now that the Kuki horns are from a previously unknown Takin area. Saramatti is 12,622."]



Cooper, H L. 1923. "The Mishmi Takin (*Budorcas Taxicolor*).*" The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 29, 550–551.

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