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NOTES ON THREE GENERA OF DOLPHINS.

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In looking over a list of the genera of Cetaceans recently, my attention was called to several names of doubtful validity which are still in common use. These names are *Neomeris*, *Orca*, and *Tursio*, now applied to members of the Delphinidæ, but which are preoccupied in other groups.

Neomeris, based on *Delphinus phocænoides* Cuvier, from the Cape of Good Hope, was described by Gray in 1846,* but the name had been previously used by Lamouroux in 1816 for a genus of polyps.† In 1891 both Blanford and Lydekker mentioned that *Neomeris* was unavailable for a genus of mammals, but not considering the group sufficiently distinct did not rename it. True, in 1889, gave *Neomeris* full generic rank in his 'Review of the Family Delphinidæ' (pp. 114, 178), and this course has been followed by Trouessart.‡ As the group is likely to be recognized either as a genus or subgenus, it should receive a name, and may be called *Neophocæna* from its close relationship to *Phocæna*, the well known genus of porpoises.

For half a century the killers have been placed in the genus *Orca* established by Gray in 1846 in the same paper in which he named *Neomeris*. A somewhat careful search has failed to reveal any earlier use of *Orca* for this group, but the name

* Zoöl. Erebus & Terror, p. 30, 1846.

† Hist. Polypiers coralligènes flexibles, 1816.

‡ Catalogus Mammalium, fasc. V, p. 1042, Nov., 1898.

proves to have been originally proposed by Wagler in 1830* to include two ziphioid whales, *Delphinus bidentatus* Hunter and *D. desmarestii* Risso. *Orca* is therefore untenable for the genus to which it is generally applied, unless it can be shown that it was so used prior to 1830. It becomes incumbent on those who wish to preserve *Orca*, to show that it was originally applied to the killers, otherwise the earliest available name seems to be *Orcinus* of Fitzinger,† and the common species will stand *Orcinus orca* (Linn.).

Tursio is one of the unfortunate names which have been given to several different groups. It was applied by Gray, in 1843, to the group of dolphins of which *Delphinus tursio* is the type, but afterwards when it was discovered that Wagler had previously used *Tursio* for *Delphinus peronii* Lacépède of the southern seas, it was transferred to this group, while Gray's *Tursio* was renamed *Tursiops* by Gervais. *Tursio* proves to have been used still earlier by Fleming, in 1822,‡ for a group of sperm whales, including *T. vulgaris* and *T. microps* (= *Physeter microps* Linn.). These species are not now recognized, and it is doubtful whether any such species exist, but this does not alter the fact that Fleming applied, or intended to apply, the name to a genus of *Physeteridæ*, thereby precluding its use in any other group. Both *Orca* and *Tursio* as originally used are apparently synonyms of other genera and therefore drop out of use. The genus to which *Tursio* has been applied by True and other recent authors has for its type *Delphinus peronii* and has received no less than four distinct names: *Tursio* Wagler, 1830, *Lissodelphis* Gloger, 1841, *Delphinapterus* Gray, 1846, and *Leucorhamphus* Lilljeborg, 1861. *Tursio* and *Delphinapterus* are both preoccupied, and *Leucorhamphus* is simply a new name for *Delphinapterus*. *Lissodelphis* § seems to be the first available name for the genus, and the species therefore becomes *Lissodelphis peronii* (Lacépède).

* Nat. Syst. d. Amphibien, p. 34, 1830.

† Wiss.-Populäre Naturgesch. Säugethiere, VI, pp. 204-217, 1860.

‡ Philosophy of Zoology, II, p. 211, 1822.

§ Gloger, Hand-u. Hilfsbuch d. Naturgeschichte, p. 169, 1841.



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