

a series of rather irregular black spots along lower part of the side alternating with vertebral spots, so that the ground colour appears as decussating stripes. Belly densely checkered with black. Two yellowish lines on the upper part of the head diverging from the muzzle over the eyes to the sides of the head; from each side of the vertical a line diverging towards the occiput. Length 10 inches, of which the tail is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

NOTE ON A PROBABLE NEW SPECIES OF IBEX.

(*Capra Dauvergnii*, nob.) or variety of *Capra sibirica*.

By R. A. STERNDALE, F.Z.S.

I HAVE always been averse to multiplication of species, and the tendency of modern research has been to diminish the number of existing sub-divisions; it is therefore with some hesitation I bring forward the claims of the subject of my note to separation from the two known species of Oriental Ibex—*Capra sibirica* and *Capra Aegagrus*; *Capra skeen* and *Capra himalayica* of authors being identical with *C. sibirica*. The question of hybridization between the various marked species of Capræ and Oves has not as yet received the attention that it should, and I think on examination it will be found that certain named species will prove to be hybrids, notably *Ovis Brookei*, but on this point I shall have more to say on a future occasion. The horns of which I have given an illustration herewith were purchased for me some months ago in Kashmir by my friend Mons. H. Dauvergne, simply on account of their size, being 52 inches in length. On receiving them I was struck by their remarkable divergence from the types of *C. sibirica* and *Aegagrus*, and from any Ibex horn I had ever seen. At first I took it to be a hybrid between the two above-mentioned species, but I subsequently abandoned this idea, for it bears no resemblance at all to the latter beyond the departure from the usual curve of the well-known Himalayan Ibex. Eccentric forms are not uncommon in the Persian animal, and Mr. Danford figures a pair, in his article in the P.Z.S. for 1875, page 458, the tips of which turning inwards cross each other. In my specimen the horns sweep backwards and outward having widely divergent tips, and in a case of hybridization I should look for some modification of the section of the horn, the

two species being so vastly different in this respect. *Capra sibirica*. has a square horn, the front broader than the back, and strongly marked with transverse ridges at intervals of less than an inch. *C. aegagrus* has an oval or compressed elliptic section, flatter on the inner side and with a sharp keel or longitudinal ridge in front, which ridge has irregular knobs at considerable distances. In the horns under notice the section resembles that of *sibirica*, flat in front and at the sides, slightly rounded beneath. In texture and colour resembling the Markhor horn, being much darker than the ordinary Ibex. Instead of the decided ridges of *C. sibirica* there are rugosities or folds at the following distances:—

Right horn... $2\frac{3}{16}$ ", $2\frac{9}{16}$ ", $3\frac{9}{16}$ ", 4", $5\frac{5}{16}$ ", $5\frac{9}{16}$ ",

Left horn..... $2\frac{3}{16}$ ", $2\frac{9}{16}$ ", $2\frac{9}{16}$ ", $4\frac{1}{16}$ ", $5\frac{11}{16}$ ", $5\frac{9}{16}$ ",

the rest of the horn is more decidedly and closely knobbed, with fine rings at the tips.

At the base the section measures about $3\frac{1}{2}$ " from front to back, and about $2\frac{3}{4}$ " across.

As regards the skull, which in my specimen is damaged in the occipital region, it is somewhat slighter than that of a head of *C. sibirica* with 40-inch horns, but until we get more specimens to work upon, it is useless to dwell on skull characteristics in this paper. Colonel Kinloch, in a letter to the *Asian*, seems to think that this is an abnormality of sport, from an abnormal specimen killed by him, but from what I gather I am inclined to believe that my skull is of a distinct species or variety from the hills north of the Kishengunga river. Mons. Dauvergne wrote to me in August last that he came across a similar head two years ago, freshly killed, horns measuring 42 inches, widely divergent like mine, with the same characteristics of smoothness and section. I hope to see this head some day as it has been traced. In a recent letter, dated 13th December, he says: "Another horn of the same tribe has been purchased by Sir Oliver St. John; that is the third I know of and those skin men tell me they have seen them often, but that they are not numerous." Their habitat is as yet uncertain, but with such an enthusiastic and experienced sportsman as Mons. Dauvergne on the scent, I do not despair of deciding this question. He thinks they may come from the range of hills north of the Kishengunga river or the Khagan country west of Kashmir. From enquiries I have made there are no similar horns in the British Museum or in the

India Museum at Calcutta. I have also received letters from Sir Victor Brooke and Mr. W. T. Blanford, both high authorities on Indian ruminants, to the effect that such a formation is new to them. Mr. Blanford suggests that it might be a hybrid between *C. sibirica* and *megaceros*, variety *Falconeri*; but though I have gone into the records of hybridization in the gardens of the Zoological Society, and therefore believe such a combination possible, the absence of any flattening of the horn and also its curvature is against the theory. The discovery of more than the three heads above mentioned, and the fixing of a particular locality, will go far towards proving the existence of a distinct species. In the meantime, in placing this head on record, I wish to associate with it the name of Mons. Dauvergne, to whom both the Society and myself are under considerable obligations as regards assistance in obtaining specimens of Kashmir fauna, and who first brought it to my notice, and therefore, as a tentative measure, I propose to call it that of "*Capra Dauvergnii*."—R. A. S.

NOTE ON MYGALE FASCIATA.

BY CAPT. T. R. M. MACPHERSON.

2nd February.—The following extract was read from a letter, which the Secretary had received from Captain T. R. M. Macpherson, forwarding ten specimens of a very large species of *Mygale* found by him in the Kamora district:—

"The spiders, though fairly common in the evergreen forests of this district, are little known, and few men have ever seen them. The first I ever saw I found in one of my boots last year, and shortly afterwards I discovered their habits. They are, I think, entirely nocturnal, keeping always to their burrows in the day-time. I have not been able to ascertain what they live on, but it is probably lizards and small birds. The natives call them *Wagh Duri* and say that they are very venomous, but I have never heard of anybody being bitten by them. However, their long, sharp and hollow 'falces,' strongly resembling the poison fangs of a snake, lead me to believe that they are poisonous, and I would recommend caution in handling them. I experimented the other day on a chicken. The spider



Sterndale, R A. 1886. "Note on a probable new species of Ibex." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 1, 21–23.

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