

NOTES.

ON AN ANOMALOUS SNAKE.—One of the characters of the genus *Pseudonaja* is the possession of two nasal plates between which is the nasal orifice. The only representative we have of the genus, *P. nuchalis*, is in the young state conspicuously marked with broad dark bands across the body, which disappear as the snake approaches maturity, with the exception of one across the nape which is persistent, and gives name to the species. A curious variation has occurred in a very young specimen, 11 inches long, presented to the Queensland Museum by Mrs. Lenneberg of Brisbane. The body is, with the exception of dark edges to the scales above, of uniform pale-brown, but the nuchal band is present and separated by a pale interspace from the suffused brown of the top of the head, in which darker spots are seen on the occipitals and supra-orbitals. The snake exhibits the further anomaly of having but one nasal shield with the nostril in its middle. In all other respects it is a *P. nuchalis*.—C. W. DE VIS.

A POSSIBLE SOURCE OF ISINGLASS.—The sample of isinglass exhibited is separated mechanically from the fibro-cartilaginous base of the dorsal fin of the shovel-nose shark, *Rhinobatus granulatus*. From an estimate of the cartilage contained in the body of one recently prepared in the museum it would appear that more than one-third of the gross weight of the fish could be converted into commercial gelatine of ordinary and superior quality. The fish is abundant in the bays of the coast, and it would surely be worth trial whether a raw material such as shark's fins largely exported to China could not be profitably utilised at home.

C. W. DE VIS.

NEST OF PHILEMON CORNICULATUS, LATH.—Two nests of the common Leather-head shewn, exemplify the adaptability of so called instinct to the employment of new means to an end. Two separate pairs of birds have discovered a quantity of string and have perceived the advantage of using it in attaching the brim of their nests to the boughs. They have not only laced the nest itself to the bough, and carried the string several times round the bottom of the nest, but they have with evident premeditation hitched loops of the string round neighbouring sprigs six inches from the nest. The lashing of the edge of the nest to the bough and the mooring lines are of strong string, the twine worked in the fabric outside is much finer.—C. W. DE VIS.

MESOPLONDON LAYARDI.—The remains of this whale, a member of the *Ziphiidae*, were found at Zilzie, near Emu Park. They were obtained some distance up the beach, so that probably it had stranded either during a spring tide or a storm. That they



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