

common hare (*Lepus timidus*), which also abounded in the same woods and plantations. Pied examples of the former were of common occurrence every year, in the months of January and February; and during the exceptionally severe winter of 1860 we ourselves shot one that was perfectly white, and it is now in our collection. In juxtaposition is a Scotch specimen from Banffshire, exhibiting the same snowy livery. We fully coincide in our author's remark that "the assertion of Von Tschudi that mules between *Lepus timidus* and *Lepus variabilis* are often met with in Switzerland is a statement which seems to require further confirmation." Not a single example of such a hybrid has ever been met with in Petworth Park.

The vexed question as to whether the ferret (*Mustela furo*) is specifically distinct from the polecat (*M. putorius*) receives but little light in the volume before us. It is admitted to be "impossible to point out any constant anatomical distinction between the animals, and they are said to breed freely with one another; on the other hand, the intolerance of cold of the ferret has been considered as evidence of its having been derived from an original stock brought from Africa or some other tropical land." In accordance with this latter belief in the exotic origin of the ferret, his portrait and biography are consistently excluded from the pages of this edition.

Mr. Colquhoun, the well-known author of 'The Moor and the Loch,' in his 'Lecture on the *Feræ Naturæ* of the British Islands,' expresses his belief that the dark ferrets so common in every rat-catcher's hutch owe their dusky hue to polecat parentage. He says, "Dark ferrets exactly resemble fougarts, only they are smaller and of lighter shade. Many of these brown ferrets are half polecats; in fact the polecat is just a wild ferret." Now, if these "dark ferrets" were ascertained to be prolific *inter se*, the identity of the two supposed species would be proved. As we formerly observed in our notice of Mr. Colquhoun's lecture*, "Surely this *quæstio vexata* might easily be decided by experiment."

"There is no rule," it is said, "without an exception;" and that which our author and his assistants have so laudably and generally observed, of excluding our domestic and semidomesticated animals, appears to us to have been transgressed in a single instance—that of the fallow deer (*Cervus dama*), which was originally an inhabitant of Asia Minor and countries bordering the Mediterranean, and therefore seems hardly to deserve a place among the *feræ naturæ* of the British Islands, to which the red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) and the roe (*C. capreolus*) are of course entitled. We believe that the new illustration of the former, in this edition, is from the gifted pencil of the greatest zoological artist now living, whose well-known portraits of living animals are beyond all praise. We sincerely wish, however, that he had not, in a facetious moment, stuck such an abnormal pair of antlers on his stag. Horns of this fantastic, semi-palmated character, though met with in continental collections, are not typical of the species, are rare in the Scottish forests; and the

* Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. 1873, xi. p. 382.

figure in the first edition, with the characteristic tripods crowning the antlers, although inferior in every other respect, gives a more correct representation of the animal's usual appearance.

Perhaps no portion of the work exhibits more favourably the advance of zoological knowledge during the last thirty years than that which comprises the orders Pinnipedia and Cetacea, popularly known as Seals and Whales. The true seals (or *Phocidæ*), with the walrus (*Trichecus*), the only representative of its genus, and the eared seals (*Otaridæ*) are comprised in the former order. We have no British representative of the last-named family; but the walrus, an arctic animal, which has occasionally been killed on the northern coasts of Scotland, in some respects constitutes a link between them and the true seals, agreeing with the latter in its general anatomy, and with the former in the peculiar mode of using its limbs when on land. This is so well described by our author that we are tempted to quote the passage.

“Instead of resting on its belly and progressing by the action of its abdominal muscles, as we have seen to be the case with the true Seals, the walrus walks upright, though in an awkward and shuffling manner, the fore paws being turned backwards, while the hind feet are directed forwards and outwards. In its motions in swimming also it holds an equally intermediate position; for while the fore feet are hardly used by the true Seals, and are the main organ of propulsion in the *Otaridæ*, all four limbs are employed by the walrus; as Dr. Pettigrew remarks, ‘so far as the physiology of its extremities is concerned, it may very properly be regarded as holding an intermediate position between the Seals on the one hand and the Seabears and Sea-lions on the other.’” (Page 270.)

We recommend such of our readers as take an interest in this subject to pay an early visit to the Zoological Gardens in the Regent's Park, where they will find the accuracy of the above account (as regards the different modes of progression, when on land, exhibited by the true seals and the sea-lions) verified by ocular demonstration. Two living members of the *Otaridæ* are now to be seen in the seal-pond, the sea-lion (*Otaria jubata*) and a smaller species (*O. pusilla*), both natives of the southern hemisphere—the former from the Falkland Islands, the latter from the Cape of Good Hope. Their intelligent and obliging keeper, François Lecomte, for whom they exhibit the strongest affection, has succeeded in so thoroughly domesticating them, as well as others of the common British species, that they come on shore when summoned by his whistle, walk along a plank that extends into the centre of the pond, and clamber up into two chairs purposely placed at the further extremity for their reception. Nay, we have even seen the sea-lion follow Lecomte into an adjacent building furnished with a sliding door, and on the latter coming out and shutting it, remain perfectly quiet inside until ordered by him to open it for himself, a feat which he performed with facility and expedition.

We may here mention that a living example of that extraordinary animal the hooded seal (*Cystophora cristata*) has been lately added



1904. "Bibliographical Notice." *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 14, 78–79.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03745480409442971>.

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