

4. Supplemental Note on the Distribution of Loder's Gazelle and the Dorcas Gazelle in Algeria. By ALFRED E. PEASE, M.P., F.Z.S.

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I find that a previous paper which I contributed on the Antelopes of Algeria (see P. Z. S. 1896, p. 809) requires correcting in some important particulars, especially in respect of the distribution of the Dorcas and Loder's Gazelle. Before dealing with the question of their distribution I might supplement what I have already written as to the names by which these different species are distinguished by the Arabs. In the North-eastern part of the Algerian Sahara the Dorcas Gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*) is generally known simply by the name "Rhezal" or "Rhezal es sahara," the gazelle of the desert, in contradistinction to "Rhezal el djebel," the gazelle of the mountain (the Admi or Edmi, *G. cuvieri*). In the neighbourhood of the Oued Djedi and Bou Saâda the Dorcas is called "senny," in the Central Sahara it is called "swain." A buck of any species is called "atrous." Till my last journey this year I have always spelt the Arab name for Loder's Gazelle (*G. loderi*) "Rhime," but I think this is not so phonetically correct as Sir Edmund Loder's spelling, "Reem." The Arab word is spelt with the three Arabic letters ra, ia, mim, which reduced to English letters would be "rym" or "rim" and pronounced "reem."

The description of the range of both the Dorcas and Loder's Gazelle requires correcting. In the first place, the Dorcas is not restricted to any such belt of desert as the first 100 miles or so south of the Atlas range. It is to be found on the smaller deserts north of the last ranges of the Atlas. This last winter I saw them and got one specimen from the country south of the Chott el Hodna and north of Bou Saâda, a district known to the French locally as the Little Sahara. I found the Dorcas Gazelle, after crossing the Oued Djedi, all the way to the Mزاب, in the Mزاب between the Mزاب and Ouargla, and south and east of Ouargla. It is to be found in the Central Sahara in the Touareg Country and in the neighbourhood of Ghadamis. Wherever the country is not purely sand-desert, and where immunity from molestation and suitable vegetation allow it to live, it is to be met with; and even in the purely sand-desert south of Tougourt and near the Oued Ighaghar I found it in small bands. In the sand-desert between Ouargla and the Erg, where I expected to find only the Rime, and in the region of the Gantarass between Hassi Tafaya and the Oued Ighaghar, I found it often on the same ground as the Rime (*Gazella loderi*). From my own observation and from the information I picked up from my Chaambi hunter and guides, I feel convinced that though the Dorcas travels often into the sand-desert, the Rime never quits the sand-country for the stony deserts, though I have of course seen the Rime on the

stony Gantaras that crop up out of the sand in this part of the Sahara as well as in the "Dhaïas" or "Houaths," or depressions in the desert where the wind has swept the bottom clear of sand. The Rime is found, *generally* speaking, in any part of the Sahara where sand predominates and where there is vegetation and where rain has fallen, though you may travel for days even in parts of this purely sand-dune country or in the Erg without coming across it.

Throughout the Algerian Sahara the Rime is very difficult to approach even where very numerous, much more so than the Dorcas; in my experience, it is shyer, much more easily scared, goes further when disturbed, and is much more on the alert than the Dorcas. This, I think, is largely due to the fact that every Chambi or Arab of the south carries a gun and many of them have greyhounds (the Sloughi); many are professional hunters for meat to supply the markets of El Oued, Ouargla, Ghadamis, and other towns. I have during the past few weeks seen many hundreds of Rime and have only secured four specimens, only once having obtained a shot at less than 400 yards. I devoted six days to hunting them from two camps and only got two, the only two chances I had, excluding a long galloping shot from the shoulder. In this district the Rime appeared to avoid the dunes where approach would have been possible, and kept to the bare level plateaux of the Gantaras¹ or the plains of the Dhaïas.

Further south, in the Erg and in the waterless region between Aïn Taïba and Ghadamis, the Rime is less sophisticated, and my Chaambi hunter told me that he had hunted in this country at places where water is 20 days apart and had been able to kill many Rimes. On one occasion he and two other professional hunters were 50 days hunting, and killed 90 Rimes and 7 Addaxes, returning from time to time to Ghadamis to dispose of the meat. I may remark that it appears to me that the meat being putrid makes little difference in its saleable value. I have seen camel-loads of stinking Gazelle- and Addax-meat brought into Ouargla market and sold by auction to crowds of eager buyers.

Only men accustomed to the country and able to bear the fatigue of long days of fast travelling on Mehara, and indifferent to thirst and the severe labour of hunting in deep sand, could succeed in the places these men frequent.

The nearest point to Ouargla where Addax have been killed this year (1899) has been 3 days south of Aïn Taïba.

¹ Gantara or Kantara in Arabic literally means a bridge, and is a term used by the Arabs to describe the ridges and plateaux of rock (? or gypsum) that crop up in the sand-desert: as a rule the Gantaras are ridges banked by sand hills running parallel with the Oueds or surrounding the Houaths.



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