

Dr. Bulkley went on leave, immediately after writing this note, and we understand that he took the specimen with him, for presentation to one of the American Museums.

It may be added that Mr. Williamson sent his collector to Petchaburi in October (two months after Dr. Bulkley obtained his bird), with express instructions to proceed to Wat Phra Taht, or elsewhere in the town, for the purpose of procuring specimens of this crow, but the man reports there were none to be seen.—EDS.]

No. II —The Giant Ibis (*Thaumatibis gigantea*) in Cambodia.

In December 1918 Dr. Malcolm Smith and I sent a couple of collectors to Koh Kong (Koh= island), and the adjacent Cambodian coast in about Lat 11° N., slightly below the point where the extreme south-east of Siam joins French Indo-Chinese territory.

The birds obtained on that trip have not yet been critically examined, but the fact should be recorded that, among them, is a pair of the still rare Ibis, *T. gigantea*, of which six specimens now appear to be known.

Oustalet's type came from Cochin-China [*Ibis gigantea*, Oust., Bull. Soc. Philom. (7) I, (1877), p. 25], while the next two examples were obtained in Trang, Peninsular Siam, by Dr. W. L. Abbott, and Messrs. Robinson and Kloss, respectively (Ibis, 1911, p. 17), and the fourth by Mr. K. G. Gairdner in the Circle of Ratburi, on the western side of central Siam [Journ. Nat. Hist. Soc. Siam. II (1916), p. 71]. The two now recorded are practically topo-types of Oustalet's bird, and are the first which have been secured otherwise than as isolated examples.

The collector who shot them reported, on his return, that he had seen at least one other specimen, so it is to be hoped that, at all events in some part of its habitat, the bird is not quite so rare as it has hitherto been believed to be.

♂, ♀. Kampong Sum Bon, near Sré Umbel, coast of Cambodia, 24 December, 1918.

Colours of soft parts (Native collector). Iris red, legs red.

Measurements. Total length (Native collector), ♂ 1065, ♀ 1020 mm. Other measurements (dried skin). Bill from gape, ♂ 223, ♀ 198. Wing, ♂ 554, ♀ 525. Tarsus, ♂ 113, ♀ 105 mm.

W. J. F. WILLIAMSON.

Bangkok, October, 1921.

No. III.—Earth Snake eating a Grass Snake.

An instance of the common Grass Snake (*Natrix piscator*) falling a victim to the apparently quiet and inoffensive Earth Snake (*Cylindrophis rufus*), came recently under my notice while out after snipe.

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The Grass Snake first attracted my attention as it lay on the side of a bund in the padi field, apparently lifeless. On going to pick it up, however, I found that it was not dead, but that it was firmly caught by the neck by something, and partly pulled into a hole in the bank, so that its head was doubled back on its body. So tightly was it held that it required considerable force to extract it, and in doing so revealed the head and neck of an Earth Snake, with its jaws firmly closed on the Grass Snake's neck. On trying to pull the Earth Snake out further, it relinquished its hold and retreated deeply into the bank, from where I was unable to recover it. From the view I obtained I gathered it to be about the same size as its victim. Presumably it was in residence in the hole in the bank, and the Grass Snake, entering in search of food, had been suddenly surprised and seized in the manner described. In no other way can I account for such a snake as *Natrix piscator*, well known for its active habits and aggressive nature, being overcome by another snake no larger than itself. In due course the Earth Snake would have worked its jaws along to its victim's head and then swallowed it.

Of the voracious habits of *Cylindrophis rufus* I have seen many instances. This snake feeds, as far as I know, upon eels and other snakes, and several specimens that have been sent me have disgorged meals, nearly as thick as, and several inches longer than, themselves.

Both snakes are common in Bangkok and throughout Siam in the lowland country. *C. rufus* is a nocturnal species, and in Bangkok, may be often seen lying in the road where it has been killed. It is easily recognised by its thick, purplish-brown body, with incomplete whitish bands. The tail is very short and pink underneath. It does not bite when captured, but has a curious habit of arching its tail over its back in the manner of a scorpion, showing the pink under surface, and looking most aggressive. The tail is blunt and of about the same thickness as the head, and to the Siamese this creature is often known as the two-headed snake. It is reputed to be very dangerous. *N. piscator* is the common Grass Snake of the padi fields. When caught it bites fiercely, but with its small teeth can not do much damage.

MALCOLM SMITH.

Bangkok, Oct. 20th 1921.

No. IV.—Curious Fishing Ceremony on the Upper Mekong.

Recently while on tour in the north of Siam, I came across an interesting ceremony among the Lao people at Wieng Kuk, near Vien Chan on the Upper Mekong.

From the 13th increase of the moon to the 15th in February