

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

## No. I. A Herd of Wild Elephants in Peninsular Siam.

(a)

The country bordering the north end of the Inland Sea, or Tale Sap, in Peninsular Siam is level land covered with grass and reeds. Eastward to the coast of the gulf the country is thinly populated, and to the north and north-west the plain ends in a swampy forest which, when seen in the distance, stands out clear cut. The region to the north is quite uninhabited. A narrow river about 2 miles long connects the northern end of Tale Sap with Tale Noi, the latter a small, very shallow lake partly overgrown with weeds.

On the plain and in the forest a herd of about 300 wild elephants are roaming. The animals appear on the plain, as well during daylight as in the night, feeding on the grass, and are usually seen in small herds. When I first visited Tale Noi last year I saw 7 or 8 elephants quite close to the river. In June of this year I counted about 40 animals scattered over the plain, some of them near the river. A photograph was taken on this occasion from a distance of 125 metres while approaching the herd through breast-high grass. All the elephants I saw were without tusks, but in their height and colour I did not notice any difference from wild elephants from other parts of Siam.

H. Warington Smyth ("Five Years in Siam") refers to the elephants found on the strip of land which separates the Gulf of Siam from the Inland Sea as a variety of the Indian elephant and states that this variety "is reddish in colour, does not exceed eight feet in height, and has remarkably small head and feet. The variation has probably resulted from confinement during the lives of many generations to a small area under peculiar conditions." The strip of land in question has for generations been under cultivation and is fairly well populated, and no elephants are found there. They frequent the uninhabited country north of the Inland Sea.

These elephants have from time to time been captured, but their death has always resulted after some comparatively short time. They show very little shyness, and take no notice of people fishing along the river.

R. HAVMÖLLER.

Singora, September 1924.

(b)

On October 8, 1923, I got near a herd of 6 elephants between Tale Sap and Tale Noi, just off the narrow stream connecting the two bodies of water. Two of the elephants were large males with

tusks. From government officials with whom I was traveling I learned that a herd of at least 200 elephants ranges over the vast grassy plain extending southward from near Nakon Sritamarat almost to Singora on the west side of the Inland Sea and practically from the Gulf of Siam to the high mountains in the west. This plain, suitable for rice growing, is entirely uncultivated owing to the ravages of the elephants. I do not see how the theory of an isolated herd in a restricted area, resulting in the development of a distinct variety of elephant, can be maintained, but it would be highly desirable to make a critical anatomical examination of the elephants of this region.

HUGH M. SMITH.

Bangkok, October 1924.

#### No. II. A New Bird from Siam.

Among a few birds incidentally collected by me on Koh Chang in April, 1924, a specimen of babbler of the genus *Pellorneum* has proved to represent a quite distinct form previously unrecognized. The species has been described under the name *Pellorneum smithi* by Mr. J. H. Riley, of the United States National Museum, in the Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington (vol. 37, p. 129-130, October 21, 1924). The species, of which the type is an adult female, resembles *Pellorneum ruficeps subochraceum*, but the upper parts, flanks, and streaks on the chest are much darker. The describer makes the following remarks on the relations of this species:

"Count Gyldenstolpe (*Ibis*, 1920, 481) records only two races of *Pellorneum* for Siam: *Pellorneum ruficeps subochraceum* Swinhoe and *Pellorneum ruficeps minus* Hume. Of the former the U. S. National Museum possesses a good series, but the latter is not represented. Various descriptions of Hume's form which have been consulted do not agree with *Pellorneum smithi*, nor does the plate (*Cat. Birds Br. Museum*, 7, 1883, pl. 13, fig. 1) of *Pellorneum intermedius* Sharpe which Oates (*Fauna British India, Birds*, 1, 1889, 141) puts in the synonymy of *Pellorneum minus*. If the plate and descriptions are anywhere near correct, *Pellorneum smithi* is a much darker bird and lacks the streaks on the hind neck."

HUGH M. SMITH.

Bangkok, June 18, 1925.

#### No. III. A Fossil Crab from Siam.

During a visit to Koh Chang in 1924 I obtained specimens of a fossil crab imbedded in a very hard matrix of bluish gray, calcareous clay. The specimens came from semi-cleared land on the