

NOTES on the Fauna of Round Island with special reference to the prepared case sent to His Excellency Sir Henry Barkly, K. C. B., by Col. N. Pike.

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Nos. 1 and 2 are, I think, of the same species through differing in colour. I took the 4 specimens in various parts of the Island, and was at first inclined to believe them different, from the bodies of No. 2 being more flattened and almost black. They belong to the family of the *Arachnids* genus *Phrynus*, noted for the excessive tenuity of the anterior feet, flattened bodies, and palpi resembling feet, terminating in claws, and bearing a resemblance to scorpions deprived of their tails. This genus is, I believe, principally known in America, Seychelles and the East Indies. There is nothing that I know of like it in Mauritius. In the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Naturelles" at page 56, is figured, *Phrynus reniformis* resembling to Round Island spiders except in the termination of palpi. The latter ends in two long forked spines and three short simple ones exclusive of the sharply pointed claw, and the palpi are of a uniform thickness, and covered with short bristly spines, whereas the *P. reniformis* have the palpi small at the base, but increasing in bulk to the claw and edged with a fringe of long spines.

I can find nothing else resembling them though I have carefully examined all the books procurable on the subject. Vinson who has written a large work on the Arachnids of Mauritius, Bourbon and Madagascar, does not even mention the genus.

No. 3 is of the genus *Olia* that is a quite common in all the Mascareigne Islands and at Seychelles. It is a predatory spider and frequents houses and gardens. This particular species I have noticed here, but it very much resembles *Olia Lenrosus*: being dried up and holding its large egg bag close under body, it is difficult to determine.

No. 4 is I think an *Epeira*, and the silver bands give it somewhat the appearance of the male *Epeira Mauritica* (Vinson) but being so shrivelled I should not like to speak positively about it.

No. 5 is very near the genus *Thomisus* (Duméril) but I don't recollect meeting with it at Mauritius.

No. 6. Two small scorpions found on the vacoa (*Pandanus Vandermeerschii*) and very plentiful on the broken leaves. They seem entirely different from the Mauritius scorpions, or from specimens I have seen from the adjacent Islands or the E. Indies.

No. 7 is a very singular specimen I captured on my first visit to Round Island. It was of a bright green just the colour of the Palm (on which) I found it. The creature was very active and defiant, and it was with difficulty I caught him. You will observe the great length of the tail compared with the others; its sting was unfortunately broken off by accident. I think it is rare as I failed to find it on my second visit, and it was whilst diligently searching for one I found the large.

No. 8. This formidable and ugly looking animal is not uncommon in the crevices of rocks and under the stones round the summit of the mountain. It is most pugnacious and when headed off from its retreat will show fight by raising the palpi, and clapping them together making a clicking noise like a crab.

This Scorpion measures  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches from head to tail, and the palpi  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches making a total length of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches, the latter are  $1\frac{3}{4}$  in circumference. The body and legs are brown and the palpi black. I tried but unsuccessfully to capture another that was running off very fast over the stones with what I took to be *Scincus Boutonii* in its claws.

I examined some specimens of scorpions in the Museum, and found them all differ from the Round Island one.

No. 9. *Scolopendra*. This is I believe the *Scolopendre mordante* of Duméril. It differs somewhat from the centipedes of Mauritius but I have seen some from the East Indies and Rodrigues precisely the same.

No. 10. *Hymenoptera*. This singular bee I captured whilst feeding on the flowers of the *Ipomœa Maritima*, during my visit in 1868. Its general colour was deep crimson, striated on the body with deep yellow. I stated then in my notes,

that I did not think it existed in Mauritius, and comparing it a few days since with a large number of specimens from all parts of the world in the Museum, I could find nothing approaching it in colour and markings.

No. 11. *Libellula*. This is the only Dragon-fly I saw on the Island, and as it is an insect of such strong and rapid flight, it may have been blown from the main land, where it is very common.

No. 12. *Orthoptera*. This insect is very numerous on Round Island, but I am unable to say if it is a native of Mauritius.

No 13. This insect, a *Gryllus*, somewhat resembles the *Truxale nasus* of Dumeril, but it has the tail like appendages of the Locust, and much finer antenæ.

No. 14. A *Grillo-talpa* or Mole-cricket, a native of almost every country in the world, and I think Mr. G. Clark makes a mistake when he says it was introduced here from Australia.

No. 15. Is a Mauritian cricket and though injured, enough is left for comparison.

No. 16 & 17. *Anomides* of Dumeril. *Monandroptera* of H. M. Lucas. These are curious specimens of *Phasma*. No. 16 was darker in colour when alive, but No. 17 that I found in the same locality were bright green. This led me at first to take them for distinct species, but on careful comparison I have concluded that they are one. I presume the diversity of colour may be owing to difference of age or sex, or probably from the peculiar food it might have partaken of in the larva state which is well known will affect other insects. I passed sometime at the Museum comparing these *Phasmas* with 27 species from various countries, and I find they all differ in many respects.

I have added a native of Mauritius No. 18 which comes the nearest to them, the *Phasma Geant* of Dumeril, I believe. There are however great differences. You will observe that in the latter species the tubercles on the corslet are very prominent, in 5 pairs, and there are two pairs on the Thorax. In those from Round Island, the tubercles are very numerous and almost microscopically small, extending ever nearly the

whole back to the abdominal extremity, where the appendages are markedly different from the Mauritius one. I have no hesitation in pronouncing it of a different species, and perhaps on close examination will be found to be quite new.

No. 19. *Coleoptera*. It is not unlike the *Calope Seraticorne* (Dumeril), but I have no specimen to compare it with.

No. 20 resembles the *Edemera Podagra* (Dum.), but the thighs are much more fleshy in the Round Island species.

No. 21 is from the Mauritius, but of lighter colour.

No. 22. Three specimens of beetles much darker in colour than the Mauritius one No. 23. The markings on the Elytra are the same in shape, but the white spots on the abdomen of No. 23 are wanting in No. 22. The general outline of form is the same.

No. 24 and 25 are from Round Island ; No. 26 a native of Mauritius is, I think, identical with No. 25.

No. 27. A very singular beetle, of which I can find neither figure nor description, and I have never seen it in Mauritius.

No. 28. *Scincus Boutonii*.

After hunting a long time in the Museum I found in the Transactions of one of the Societies of France, (which Mr. Bouton was in great trouble about as mislaid) a description of the large lizard the *S. Telfairii* that you have in bottle.

The 2nd in size is the *S. Bojerii*, and the 3rd and smallest *S. Boutonii*,

I am inclined to believe if these animals were sent to England and carefully examined that they would be re classed.

The *Scincus* so common along all the shores in Mauritius is precisely the same in size, habits and markings as the *S. Boutonii*, but the other two are I believe not found either in the Mascareigne group or Seychelles. I saw one from Ceylon about a year ago closely resembling them, but I had no opportunity to compare them. The *S. Bojerii* unlike the *Telfairii* I found mostly in open places on smooth rocks, also great numbers of its eggs deposited in rows on the under side of the tranches of the vocoa. Sometimes as many as twelve together, perfectly white and as large as a musket ball. The eggs of the *Telfairii* eluded my search, and I think they must deposit

them in the crevices of rocks like the *Scincus* of the Mauritius caves.

I observed also the bright green lizard with crimson spots similar to those in Mauritius but did not catch one.

The two small scorpions in the bottle are identical with those here.

In the absence of works on the subject I am very reluctant to give any opinion about the Snakes, past their being all harmless and all colubras. The died specimen I sent you however was very pugnacious and told raising and flattening his head like the poisonous Snakes. This induced me at first to think them venomous, but having lost my glass at the time, I was unable to examine its teeth, and it is difficult to do so now. Unlike any other Snake I know, it glides with extreme rapidity over the ground with its head elevated.

I have taken some trouble to compare these specimens from Round Island, but there is such a poverty of books of reference here, that I think nothing definite can be arrived at with them until they have been forwarded to some good authority in England. Still I trust these meagre notes may be of some use to you in preparing your Report on Round Island, and if I can be of any further service to Your Excellency pray command me, as it will always give me great pleasure to respond to your calls.

Very truly yours,

NICOLAS PIKE.

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NOTES on Round Island Plants collected by His Excellency Sir H. Barkly on the 10th November 1869, by Mr. Horne, Sub-Director of the Botanical Gardens.

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No. 1. *Tylophora species*: According to the specimen in the Royal College Herbarium, this plant agrees with the Mauritius *T. Asthmatica*, specimens of which are forwarded, but the species seems to me to differ from the descriptions of