



The Cambridge Natural History, Vol X., Mammalia (Illustrated)

Frank Evers Beddard

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Inasmuch as Sir W. H. Flower and Mr. Lydekker could not profess to treat the Mammalia exhaustively within the limits of nearly 800 pages, in their Introduction to the Study of Mammals, it is obvious that the present volume, which appears ten years later and is of rather less size, can contain but a selection of the enormous mass of facts at the disposal of the student of this group. Thus the chief question for myself was what to select and what to leave aside. It will be observed that I have reduced the pages of this book to conformity with those of other volumes of the series by treating some groups more briefly than others. It has appeared to me to be desirable to treat fully such groups as the Edentata and the Marsupialia, and permissible to be more brief in dealing with such huge Orders as those of the Rodentia and Chiroptera. Lengthy disquisitions upon such familiar and comparatively uninteresting animals as the Lion and Leopard have been curtailed, and the space thus saved has been devoted to shorter and more numerous accounts of other creatures. As there are nearly six hundred genera of living Mammals known to science, omission as well as compression became an absolute necessity. I have given, I hope, adequate treatment from the standpoint of a necessarily limited treatise to the majority of the more important genera of Mammals both living and extinct; but the length of this part of the book had to be increased by the discoveries, which give me at once an advantage and a disadvantage as compared with the two authors whose names I have quoted, of a considerable number of important new types in the last ten years. Such forms as *Notoryctes*, *Romerolagus*, *Caenolestes*, "Neomylodon," and *Ocapia* could not possibly have been omitted.

In preparing my accounts of both living and extinct forms I have nearly invariably consulted the original authorities, and have often supplemented or verified these accounts by my own dissections at the Zoological Society's Gardens. My rule has not, however, been invariable in this matter, inasmuch as there exist two recent and trustworthy text-books of Mammalian Palaeontology—Professor Zittel's *Handbuch der Palaeontologie*, and Dr. A. Smith Woodward's manual, *Outlines of Vertebrate Palaeontology*, in the Cambridge Biological Series. Where the name of a genus only or its range, or merely one or two facts about it, are mentioned, I have not thought it necessary to go further than these two works. But a good deal has been done even since the appearance of these two volumes which it will be found that I have not ignored.

I have to thank my editors for the trouble which they have taken in the revision of the proofs and for many suggestions. To Professor Osborn, of Columbia University, New York, I am indebted for some kind suggestions. My daughter Iris has assisted me in various ways. Finally, I desire to express my indebtedness to Mr. Dixon and to Mr. M. P. Parker for the care which they have taken in the preparation of the figures which were drawn by them especially for this work.

Frank E. Beddard.

London, February 28, 1902.

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