



STRAITS SETTLEMENTS

Annual Report of the Raffles
Museum and Library
for the year 1937

BY

M. W. F. TWEEDIE,
Acting Director, Raffles Museum and Library.

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The Mammal Gallery.—The mounted specimens of the Malayan Seladang (*Bos gaurus hubbaki*) and the Javanese Banteng (*Bos banteng banteng*) were placed in a large glass case, where they can be maintained in a good state of preservation and are displayed to much better advantage than before.

A whole wall case was devoted to mounted heads of Malayan big game, with which are displayed photographs of Seladang presented by Mr. THEODORE HUBBACK. Two magnificent Seladang heads are included together with Banteng, Wild Pig and Rhinoceros.

The cast and skeleton of the Duyong (*Halicore duyong*) were rearranged so that the former merges into a green background and the latter stands out sharply against a black, both specimens appearing to excellent advantage. The case devoted to the smaller cetacea (Dolphins and Porpoises) was rearranged in the same way.

Some of the cases containing primates and other small mammals were renovated and their contents added to or renewed, and stands suggesting a natural habitat were introduced.

The Bird Gallery.—Two notable additions were made to the bird gallery. A habitat case was designed showing the nesting of the Malayan House swift (*Micropus affinis affinis*) in the verandah of a house: the specimens used were mounted by an expert taxidermist in England.

A wall case was arranged to illustrate the nesting habits of birds with special reference to the swiftlets of the genus *Collocalia*, whose nests afford the birds-nest soup esteemed by Chinese epicures. In the arrangement of this case every effort has been made to follow the precepts of modern museum technique. Printed explanatory labels are employed and specimens of the different grades of nest, leading up to the "white nest", the most valuable of all, are exhibited with the different species and subspecies of swiftlet responsible for them. The whole is displayed against a dark grey background. The formation of the nests from the congealed saliva of the birds is a fact not very widely known, especially to Europeans, and the exhibit has attracted much attention.

The Reptile and Fish Galleries.—A wall case was arranged to exhibit the four local species of marine turtles. Descriptive labels in English accompany each species and the Malay name is also appended in Arabic script. The commercial importance of these reptiles is also referred to and a small series of locally made "tortoise-shell" ornaments is exhibited with the Hawksbill Turtle, which supplies the tortoise-shell of commerce.

A specimen label from this case runs as follows:—

The Green or Edible Turtle

Chelonia mydas (Linn.)

Malay name: Penyu

This is the common edible turtle of commerce and furnishes the well known delicacy, turtle soup.

The capture of the turtles for this purpose is almost confined to their breeding season, as at other times they are wary and difficult to catch. At breeding time, which occurs from April to June in the Malayan region, the females come ashore to deposit their eggs in the sand, and are then perfectly tame and can be easily captured.

In Malaya they breed extensively on the small islands off the east coast of the Peninsula, but here it is the eggs rather than the turtles that are sought after. These are sold very cheaply and are a valuable source of food to the poorer section of the community. They are imported into

APPENDIX A

Donations

The following kindly made donations to the collections during the year. Some of the acquisitions are described in greater detail in foregoing sections of this report:—

- AZIZ, THE HON. UNGKU A.**—Three crocodile skulls from Perak.
- BASAPA, Mr. W. L. S.**—Specimens of Malaysian birds and mammals which died in the Ponggol Zoo during the year.
- VAN BEUREN, Mrs. M.**—A piece of opal stone from Australia.
- BRADDELL, Mr. R. St. J.**—Three large and two small water colour drawings of Malacca, *circa* 1811, by Lieutenant JAMES GEORGE; fifteen coloured lithographs of Malacca, Penang and Singapore by FISQUET and LAUVERGNE, early XIX Century.
- CAULENFELS, Dr. P. V. VAN STEIN, O.B.E.**—A neolithic stone chopper from the Tembeling River, Pahang.
- DIRECTOR, GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, F.M.S.**—An elephant's tooth from Sungai Siput, Perak.
- EDGAR, Mr. A. T.**—A series of birds and a piece of "masonry" from a hornbill's nest, from Perak.
- GOSKAR, Mr. T. A.**—A black cobra from Singapore.
- HODGKIN, Mr. E. P.**—Five mice from Kuala Lumpur.
- HUBBACK, Mr. T. R.**—Photographs of wild *Seladang*.
- JONES, THE REV. H. VAUGHAN, CHAPLAIN TO THE FORCES, MALAYA COMMAND.**—A large bell, given by Mrs. BALESTIER, wife of the American Consul, to St. Andrew's Church, Singapore in 1843.
- KITCHENER, Mr. H. J.**—A collection of fresh-water fishes from the rivers of Pahang.
- KNOWLES, THE LATE Mr. V. D.**—A collection of twenty pieces of brass-ware from Sumatra.
- KOPSTEIN, Dr. F.**—A series of reptiles' eggs and some specimens of the rare snake *Xenodermus javanicus* from Java.
- MACKENZIE, Mr. H. E.**—A king cobra from Sungai Tekong Estate, South Johore.
- MADOC, Mr. G. C.**—Specimens of birds from Selangor and Pahang.
- MAYNARD, Mr. F. C.**—A banded krait (*Bungarus fasciatus*) from Johore.
- MOYSEY, Mr. I.**—Six neolithic stone tools from the Tembeling River.
- SEDDON, Mr. G. H.**—A neolithic adze and an elephant's tooth from the Kampar River, Perak.
- SEIMUND, Mr. E.**—A collection of mammals from Port Dickson, Negri Sembilan. A series of flying squirrels and two specimens of *Paguma leucomystax* (a rare carnivore) from Kuala Lumpur.