

Curious Facts about Curious Animals.

By FRANCIS W. DOUGHTY.

Few people ever stop to think of the vastness of the animal creation, and the wide differences between its individuals. There are greater differences between

mal the appearance of being encased in armor. Now this skin is entirely impenetrable to ordinary weapons, and will turn a rifle ball as effectually as would a steel plate. Between the folds, however, there is practically no skin—merely flesh.

Hunters of the rhinoceros have to make a study of this, otherwise they might blaze away at the big beast to eternity and never produce any effect.

The eyes of the rhinoceros are very small

and formidable horn rendering it exceedingly dangerous to anything which comes in its way.

It is not generally known that in India they tame a species of leopard and employ the beast in hunting.

This is the cheetah, or hunting leopard, which we illustrate in Figure 2.

The cheetah is a native of India and also of Africa. It is as large as the ordinary leopard, but stands higher, owing to the length of its limbs, which are slender and

The cheetah then makes a few surprising springs and seizes him by the neck. If many deer are near each other they often escape by flight, for the leopard can charm but one at a time. Should the cheetah miss his aim, he never pursues the animal, but slinks back to his master, apparently much chagrined, who replaces the beast and waits for another chance.

If, on the contrary, the cheetah is successful, the ferocity of his nature at once displays itself, so that to recover the prey



Fig. 1.—RHINOCEROS.

animals than between birds, fishes, etc. So, also, with their habits.

Let us look into this a little and consider a few curious facts about a few curious animals. We will begin with the rhinoceros. You may see his picture in Figure 1.

The rhinoceros inhabits the warmer parts of India, Africa, Siam and Southern China.

and resemble those of the hog, and are said to be placed nearer the nose than the eyes of any other quadruped.

The mouth of the rhinoceros is a study in itself.

Instead of being in front near the lips, its teeth are set back at an unusual distance; or to put it differently, the lips of the beast are unusually long. They are



Fig. 2.—CHEETAH, OR HUNTING LEOPARD.

There are several varieties of the rhinoceros.

The one and two-horned species are the principal ones. Some are white, others black. Probably there exist still other shades of difference, which will be determined when the habits of the beasts are more closely observed.

exceedingly flexible also, and the upper lip can be extended six or seven inches beyond the end of the nose.

The rhinoceros uses his lips with a degree of dexterity which renders them almost equal to hands, and in them is believed to be nearly all the sense of feeling which the beast possesses.



Fig. 3.—THE CHLAMYPHORUS.

The most peculiar thing about the rhinoceros is his skin.

Literally he is clothed in leather, and very tough leather at that.

There is no hair upon this strange beast, but instead the skin is covered with irregular incrustations which have been improperly termed scales. About the neck this skin is gathered into thick folds, other folds extend between the shoulders and forelegs, and another from the hind part of the back to the thighs, giving the ani-

The rhinoceros lives in shady forests adjoining rivers, or in swampy jungles. It is fond of wallowing in the mud like a hog.

Its nature is exceedingly fierce, and its disposition sulky and treacherous. Its strength is so great that it is more than a match for the tiger or even the elephant.

In captivity it will remain quiet and docile for a long time and then suddenly break out into fits of ungovernable rage, which nothing can check, its great strength



Fig. 4.—THE KANGAROO.

tapering. Its body is rather slender and reminds one of the greyhound. Its fur is yellowish, beautifully variegated with black spots.

Trained cheetahs in India are led out in chains with blinders over their eyes, or sometimes carried to the hunting ground in carts.

the keeper has to be extremely cautious, enticing him with meat carried for the purpose.

The cheetahs are not common, and are so highly prized by their owners that they are seldom seen in menageries.

In Figure 3 we illustrate an animal never seen on exhibition—a genuine zoological



Fig. 5.—ESQUIMAUX DOGS.

Upon reaching the required spot, all remain quiet until the game is sighted. Should a herd of antelopes appear, for instance, and any of them become separated from the rest, the cheetah's head is brought

curiosity, found only in Chili. Our engraving furnishes an accurate illustration of three of these strange creatures, which are generally considered a species of mole. The chlamyphorus burrows in the ground



Fig. 6.—THE ICHNEUMON.

to face it, the blinds removed and the chains taken off.

Immediately the animal crouches and creeps along with his breast almost touching the ground until he gets within a short distance of the deer, who, although seeing him approach, appears to be so fascinated that he seldom attempts to run away.

and spends most of its time under the earth, feeding on insects and seldom coming to the surface, except at night.

This animal is admirably adapted for the life it leads. The top of the head and the whole upper surface of the body are covered with a thin shell of a consistence between horn and leather, divided by in-