

## MISCELLANEA.

### MAMMALS.

THE APPENDICULAR SKELETON OF THE DUGONG (*Halicore dugong*).—In a recent note on the Dugong of the Gulf of Manaar (*Journ. Asiat. Soc. Bengal*, 1905, p. 238) I expressed an intention of dealing with certain anatomical points in a subsequent communication. As, however, most of these points have since been elucidated in a series of memoirs by Messrs. H. Dexler and L. Freund (see Wiegmann's *Archiv für Naturgeschichte* for 1906, vol. i, p. 77, and the *American Naturalist*, vol. xi, pp. 49 and 567, 1906), further descriptions are unnecessary: these authors' observations were made on Australian specimens, but I cannot detect any constant difference between the races of *Halicore* found in Australian and in Indian seas. There are two features in the skeleton, however, to which I would like to invite attention, namely (*a*) the presence of three distinct bones in the pelvic girdle, and (*b*) the variability of the manus.

(*a*) In recent accounts of the vestigial pelvic girdle of the species two bones are said to be present (see Weber's *Die Säugetiere*, p. 732, fig. 526). In a large Australian ♂ skeleton, however, and in an individual of the same sex and approximately the same size dissected by myself on the Madras coast, I find that there is a third bone, which lies at the distal extremity of the lower of the two

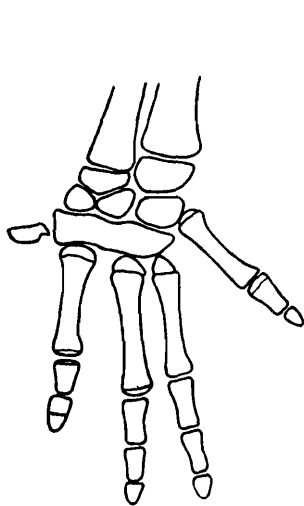
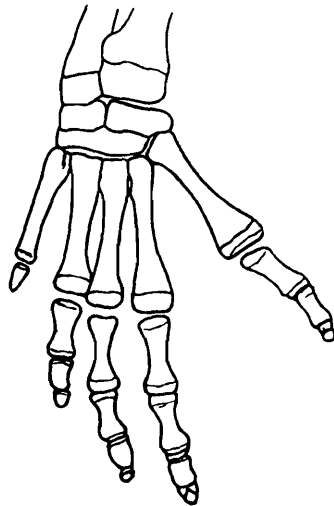
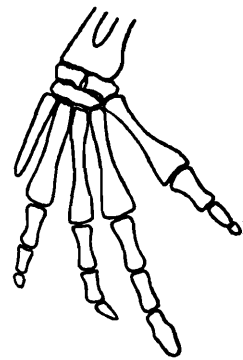


FIG. 1,  $\times \frac{1}{6}$ .

already recognized. It is compressed and nail-shaped, measuring about 15 mm. in length and 6 mm. at the proximal end in breadth. The relations of the three bones to one another are represented in the accompanying diagram (fig. 1). There is probably a considerable amount of variation as regards the form and size of the three bones, but this is a question on which the material at my disposal affords little information.

(*b*) I have examined the manus of the two specimens already referred to, as well as that of several other individuals in which it is imperfect, while I am indebted to Sir William Turner and Prof. D. J. Cunningham for photographs of a specimen in the Anatomical Museum of the University of Edinburgh and to Dr. A. Willey for a sketch (fig. 4) of the hand of an adult female in the Colombo Museum. An examination of this material proves, as is well shown in figs. 2, 3 and 4, that the bones vary in number and relative development

Although all the specimens I have seen, or regarding which I have received detailed information, have been fully adult, probably measuring between nine and ten feet in length in the flesh, the degree to which ossification has progressed is very variable and the hand seems to be smaller in some individuals than in others of the same size. The first digit is always less well-developed than the others. In some individuals it consists of a short oblong or triangular bone, often more or less irregular in outline ; in others in which it is represented by

FIG. 2,  $\frac{1}{6}$ .FIG. 3,  $\times \frac{1}{6}$ FIG. 4,  $\times \frac{1}{6}$ .

a single bone, this bone is long and styliform ; while in others again there are two bones, the distal one being short and nail-shaped. The other digits show similar variations but not to the same extent. The bones of the carpus vary chiefly as regards ankylosis. Those in the distal row are used together, probably in all cases ; but in the proximal row there may be either two or three bones present. In the latter case it is the scaphoid which is distinct from the lunate bone. The figures, which are outlines of actual specimens reduced to one-sixth the natural size, illustrate these variations very clearly, fig. 3 showing, further, the actual relations between the fourth and fifth digits—a feature which is not always correctly represented.

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#### BIRDS.

EGG LAID BY A CAPTIVE GOSHAWK (*Astur palumbarius*).—Lieutenant-Colonel Phillott has recently sent to the Museum the egg described in the following note. It measures 50 mm. in length and 40 mm. in greatest transverse diameter ; the colour is a clear, pale green, the outline regular.

“ My friend Miyān Mahmūd Sahib-zada of Taunsa, Dera Ghazi Khan, has sent me a Goshawk's egg laid by a trained bird which had been in confinement for sixteen years and was, when caught, a ‘ hagarad ’ or mature bird. This is the first egg she has laid in captivity. It is very like a heron's egg and has a coarse shell, being without markings.

D. C. PHILLOTT.”