

NATURAL HISTORY
OF THE
MAMMALIA OF INDIA
AND CEYLON.

BY

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"SEONEE, OR CAMP LIFE IN THE SATPURA RANGE," ETC.

WITH 170 ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR, T. W. WOOD,
AND OTHERS.

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assuming all sorts of queer attitudes. Brehm describes one as lying prone on a thick branch placed in its cage, with all four legs hanging down straight, two on each side of the branch—certainly a remarkable position for an animal to assume of its own free will.

The type of this animal constitutes the genus *Neofelis* of Gray, containing two species, this and the *Neofelis (leopardus) brachyurus* of Formosa.

No. 206. FELIS VIVERRINA.

The Large Tiger-Cat (Jerdon's No. 108).

NATIVE NAMES.—*Mach-bagral*, *Bagh-dasha*, Bengali; *Bunbiral*, *Khupya-bagh*, Hindi; *Handoon-deeva*, Singhalese.

HABITAT.—India generally, Burmah, the Malay countries, and Ceylon. Jerdon says he has not heard of it in Central India nor in the Carnatic, nor farther west of Nepal. I have been, however, informed that a wild cat was killed lately at Jeypore in the act of carrying off an infant of four months old. I know of no cat, save this species, capable of such a proceeding. The child was rescued alive.

DESCRIPTION.—“Of a mouse gray colour, more or less deep and sometimes tinged with tawny, with large dark spots, more or less numerous, oblong on the back and neck and in lines, more or less rounded elsewhere, and broken or coalescing” (but never ocellate: *Blyth*); “cheeks white; a black face stripe; beneath dull white; chest with five or six dark bands; belly spotted,” (whence the name *celi-*



Skull of *Felis viverrina*.

dogaster applied by Temminck) “tail with six or seven dark bands and a black tip” (sometimes spots only); “feet unspotted.”—Jerdon.

SIZE.—Head and body 30 to 34 inches; tail only 10 to 13; height about 15 or 16; weight according to Hodgson and Jerdon, about 17 lbs.

The frontal and jugal bones in old specimens of this species are united by a bar which forms a complete bony orbit—a peculiarity possessed, as I have before observed, by *F. longicaudata*, but by few other felines. *Felis rubiginosa*, *F. planiceps*, and *F. Ellioti* are also cats of this type, which Gray has separated into the genus *Viverriceps*.

This large cat is not uncommon near Calcutta, and is reputed to live much on fish and fresh-water shells, but also I should say on larger game. According to some authors (Buchanan-Hamilton, for instance), it is fierce and untameable, but Blyth states that he had several big toms, quite tame, and in the Surrey Zoological Gardens there was many years ago a very fine male which he had frequently handled and had even on his lap. He relates, however, in another part, that a newly caught male of this species killed a tame young leopardess of twice its own size, having broken through the partition of a cage, but he did not eat any portion of her. The Prince of Wales took home a very fine specimen of this cat among his collection of living animals.

Mr. Rainey writes of the ferocity of this cat in the following terms: "I can testify to the existence of the above qualities in this animal (*Felis viverrina*, Bennett), which is rather abundant in these parts, generally taking up its quarters in low, swampy jungle, where it often carries off calves, for which the leopard (*F. leopardus*, Linn.), undeservedly gets credit. Lately, a couple of months ago, a pair of them at night broke into a matted house, and went off with a brace of ewes, which had half-a-dozen lambs between them, born only a short time before their mothers met with their bloody end. I have caught this species in traps, and when let loose in an indigo vat with a miscellaneous pack of dogs, they have invariably fought hard, and at times proved too much for their canine adversaries, so that I have had to go to their rescue, and put an end to the fight, by a spear-thrust, or a heavy whack on the back of the head with a stout club. Some years ago one got into my fowl-house at night, and just as I opened the door to enter inside, it made a fierce jump at me from a perch on the opposite side. I had just time to put the barrel of my gun forward, on the muzzle of which it fell, and had its chest blown to atoms, as I pulled the trigger instantly it alighted there."

No. 207. *FELIS MARMORATA*.

The Marbled Tiger-Cat (Jerdon's No. 109).

HABITAT.—The Sikim Himalayas, Assam, Burmah, and the Malayan countries.

DESCRIPTION.—"Size of a domestic cat, but with stouter limbs and a much longer and thicker tail, of uniform thickness throughout and reaching back to the occiput when reflected; the upper canines are not remarkably elongated as in *F. macroceloides* (*macrocelis*); ears rather small and obtusely angulated, with a conspicuous white spot on their hinder surface" (Blyth). "Ground colour dingy-fulvous, occasionally yellowish grey; the body with numerous elongate wavy black spots, somewhat clouded or marbled; the head and nape with some narrow blackish lines, coalescing into a dorsal interrupted band; the thighs and