

The Hoofed Mammals of Nigeria

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SUPER-FAMILY *Suina* : PIGS AND HIPPOPOTAMUSES

THE antelopes, the giraffe and the chevrotain are all ruminants, but we now reach the other division of the even-toed ungulates, the members of which do not chew the cud. These are the *Suina*, as opposed to the *Ruminantia*, and the group consists of the pigs and the hippopotamuses, known to science respectively as the *Suidæ* and *Hippopotamidæ*.

FAMILY *Suidæ* : PIGS

The pigs differ in structure from the hippopotamuses in a number of points, but since the two families are sufficiently distinct to the ordinary person we need not go too much into details. It will suffice to say that the pigs are more or less hairy and have flat disc-like, mobile snouts with terminal nostrils ; although four toes are developed only two are really functional. The family is further characterised by the growth of the upper and lower canines into long upward curving tusks.

Two wild pigs, the Red River-hog and the Wart Hog, definitely occur in Nigeria ; there seems every reason why a third, the Giant Forest Hog, should occur, since it has been found both in the French Cameroons and in the Gold Coast, but so far no trace of it has been discovered within our limits. It repeats the mystery of the Bongo, which has the same curious distribution. As I am not including in these notes animals for which there is not good evidence, I omit the Forest Hog from the keys and main descriptions but give a note at the end from which it may be recognised in case it turns up.

Colour red, with a white line down the centre of the back ; ears tufted	<i>Choiropotamus</i>
Hair sparse, not red ; no tufts to the ears ...	<i>Phacochoerus</i>

GENUS *Choiropotamus*

The Red River-hog, or Bush Pig as it is sometimes called, though the name really belongs to the corresponding species in East Africa, is easily distinguishable by its bright red colour, the white line which runs down the

the existence of the Pygmy Hippo in the Owerri Province ; he has submitted photographs of skulls to Captain Dollman of the British Museum who considers there is no doubt about the identification. In this family all four toes touch the ground in walking.

GENUS *Hippopotamus*

Hippopotamus amphibius L. HIPPO

There is little point in my entering into a description of this unmistakable beast ; the differences between it and the Pygmy Hippo will be given under the heading of that animal. It is spread over the whole of the Ethiopian region and in the remote past its range extended to England. The species has, as usual, been divided up into a number of geographical races, mainly on skull characters, ours being said to be *H. a. tachadensis* Schwarz. The range in Nigeria is wide, as the hippo is found quite near the coast in the large rivers and also as far north as Katuna (Bornu) and Abadie (Zaria). Length, full grown, 14', height at the shoulder about 3' 6", and weight at least 3 tons.

GENUS *Chæropsis*

Chæropsis liberiensis Morton. PYGMY HIPPO

This was always considered to be confined to Liberia until quite recently when, as stated above, Mr. Heslop obtained photos of skulls in The Owerri Province. It is therefore included here and the main differences from the large hippo given so that anyone interested can confirm or refute this statement. In life the Pygmy Hippo has always an oily-looking skin shining as though it had just emerged from the water, even though it be in reality quite dry. It is also much more pinkish-purple in colour. A marked difference in the appearance of the face arises from the fact that the Pygmy has no prominent bones above the eyes, a feature which endows the large hippo with a look of tired surprise. In the skull the absence of these raised bones over the eye sockets is very marked ; it will also be found that the pygmy has (in practically every case) only one pair of small cutting teeth (incisors) in the middle of the lower jaw, whereas the large hippo always has two pairs and usually three pairs. Length 6 feet, height at withers 2' 6", weight about 600 lbs.

FAMILY *Rhinocerotidae* : RHINOCEROSSES

The Rhinoceros is well enough known not to require a detailed description ; one point, however, that may not be generally appreciated is that the horns which arise on the nose are quite different from the horns of antelopes or the antlers of stags. They consist entirely of agglomerated hair and arise from the skin, having no connexion with the skull at all, though there are slight bosses on the nasal bones to support them.

The family has both Asiatic and African forms, there being two in Africa, the White Rhino and the Black Rhino. Ours is the latter, but there is in reality little difference in colour; both possess, normally, two horns, though specimens with three or five have been recorded from the East Coast. The feet have three toes, each of which is provided with a hoof-like nail.

GENUS *Diceros*

Diceros bicornis L. THE BLACK RHINO

This animal is widely spread over the whole of the Ethiopian region but as regards Nigeria is confined to the Lake Chad area. The upper lip of this species projects well beyond the lower and is prehensile. The horns appear in both sexes; the longest front horn recorded from Kenya is 53½ inches, but in Nigeria two feet is a good one. The Black Rhino stands five feet or more at the shoulder and weighs two or three tons when mature.

The African Hobby

Falco Cuvieri

THE African Hobby is found throughout the greater part of the continent of Africa, but it is rare everywhere. The specimen from which the accompanying illustration was painted was shot at Ibadan in the latter part of 1938, and apart from this record it had only been recorded in Nigeria authentically from Victoria and doubtfully from south-eastern Kano Province. It has been obtained in the Gambia and on the Gold Coast, but is better known in East than in West Africa.

Little is known of the habits of this bird; they probably differ little from those of the European Hobby (*Falco subbuteo subbuteo*), although the nesting habits of the African species may differ; the European Hobby prefers to lay its eggs in the old nests of others of the larger-sized birds.

The flight is similar to that of the European Hobby, which has been recorded as being perhaps the fastest known bird. The bird obtained at Ibadan was shot in open country after it had been perching for a short time in a tree, and the collector described the flight as graceful and leisurely.

It was described in the *South African Quarterly Journal* in 1830, and it was observed by Mr. H. T. Ussher flying round Elmina Castle as far back as April, 1872. It was obtained by Mr. W. P. Lowe in the Gambia in January of 1929. The Ibadan specimen was obtained by Mr. G. B. Harvey, whom the *Nigerian Field* congratulates on the record, and welcomes the opportunity of recording an interesting addition to the distribution of this rare species.

This is another bird which may well be more common than has been believed hitherto, and notes on its distribution and habits will be of the greatest interest and value.

W.A.F.