

## REPORT OF THE NATURAL HISTORY SECTION FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 1933.

### **Sub-Committee in charge of the Section.**

The Sub-Committee of the Trustees who administered the affairs of the Section during the period under review comprised Sir Reginald Spence (Chairman), Dr. N. A. F. Moos and Mr. S. H. Prater. In March 1933, Sir Reginald Spence resigned as he was leaving India. Mr. P. M. D. Sanderson was appointed a member of the Sub-Committee in place of Sir Reginald Spence and elected Chairman.

### **Finance.**

The funds for the maintenance and working of the Section for the year were provided from (1) a grant of Rs. 28,200 received from the Government of Bombay ; (2) In accordance with the terms of the agreement between the Bombay Natural History Society and the Trustees of the Prince of Wales Museum, a grant of Rs. 10,948 was made by the Society being half the cost of the salaries of the Curator and the two Assistant Curators.

Government imposed an emergency cut of 5 per cent. on the grant to the Natural History Section for the year under review. As has been previously indicated, the grant to the section is barely sufficient for its maintenance. From its very inception it has been dependent mainly on the generosity of private benefactors for the funds requisite for its progress and development.

The reduction in the grant necessitated not only a reduction in salaries but also a reduction in the personnel of the staff, which the section could ill afford. One most unfortunate result has been the loss of the services of the artist, Mr. K. B. Sawardekar, whose excellent work has done much to improve the attractiveness of the exhibits in the galleries. He painted the backgrounds of all the habitat groups and was responsible for many of the beautiful casts of fishes, snakes etc. His work has been commented on by many visitors to the section ; among them distinguished and eminent Naturalists from America and foreign countries. I take this opportunity of placing on record my great appreciation of his services to the Museum. It is hoped that with the restoration of the grant the section will be once again in a position to secure the service of an artist, but if it can find one of the same skill and experience as Mr. Sawardekar, it will be fortunate.

### Mammal Gallery.

Owing to the plans, for the extension of the present available space for the Natural History Section, being under consideration all major work in the section was postponed with a view to saving expenditure, as many of the existing groups would have to be broken down and reconstructed in the new galleries. This is particularly true of the Mammal Gallery which contains large exhibits in groups with plaster backgrounds—each one would have to be taken down, rebuilt and repainted.

The exhibits of the monkeys were re-arranged and exhibited to better advantage. The reference collections were re-arranged and the cataloguing of these was undertaken.

Among the more important contributions to the mammal collections were a fine skull and horns of a Gaur (*Bibos gaurus*) presented by Mr. D. S. Sladen, I.C.S., a skull of the Lesser One-horned Rhinoceros (*R. sondaicus*), a gift from the Burma Forest School, Pyinmana, through the energies of Mr. H. C. Smith and a collection of 23 mammals' skins also presented by Mr. H. C. Smith.

During the year some skins and skulls of Loris and Langurs were sent to Mr. W. W. A. Phillips of the Colombo Museum, for examination and return, in connection with his work on the Ceylon Mammals.

### Bird Gallery.

Work was continued on the preparation of the series of Classification Cases. Cases illustrating the following families were completed: The Finches (*Fringillidæ*), the Swallows (*Hirundinidæ*), the Wagtails (*Motacillidæ*) and the Sunbirds (*Nectariniidæ*). Difficulty in securing fresh specimens for mounting caused much delay.

Among the more important acquisitions to the bird collections were 253 specimens, collected during the survey of the Eastern Ghats, including the *Pycnonotidæ*, *Turdidæ*, *Muscicapidæ*, and the *Laniidæ*. This material was named by Messrs. Whistler and Kinnear.

Our acknowledgments are also due to Mr. J. O. S. Donald for a specimen of a magnificent Golden Eagle from Chitral and to Mr. F. Ludlow for a fine specimen of the Tibet Raven from Ladak.

### Reptile and Fish Gallery.

The remaining specimens of the *Agamidæ* were forwarded for study to Dr. Malcolm Smith of the British Museum in connection with his work on the revised edition of the Fauna of British India (Reptilia).

The Frog collection was re-arranged and catalogued. The lizards were also arranged and partly catalogued.

A paper entitled "Notes on Indian Batrachians" was contributed to the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society by Mr. C. McCann.

# PRINCE OF WALES MUSEUM OF WESTERN INDIA

A brief Report of the Museum from its  
inception to 31st March 1927



Published by the Trustees of the Prince of Wales  
Museum of Western India, Bombay

069.09(5431)

P. W. M.

~~434~~  
58/20  
D436(9)

BOMBAY  
PRINTED AT THE GOVERNMENT CENTRAL PRESS  
1928