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# BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

AN ATTEMPT TO GIVE SOME ACCOUNT OF A PORTION OF  
THE TERRITORIES UNDER BRITISH INFLUENCE  
NORTH OF THE ZAMBEZI

*By*

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H.M. COMMISSIONER AND CONSUL-GENERAL IN BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

WITH SIX MAPS AND 220 ILLUSTRATIONS

REPRODUCED FROM THE AUTHOR'S DRAWINGS OR FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



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although I have seen elephants at work in Hyphæne palm forests on the Congo actually being able to watch them from a boat working their will on these trees for the sake of the "ginger-bread" covering of the nuts, I cannot say I have seen them kneel down and uproot a tree with the tusk. One is a little puzzled sometimes to account for the enormous development of the two remaining upper incisor teeth, unless they were used for some such purpose as digging up roots. They are not so useful as defensive or offensive weapons that they should be worth development for this purpose alone. In killing animals much less in size than himself the elephant generally uses his trunk and feet, though I admit many cases occur—including one which took place a few months ago in England—where an elephant does deliberately slay his victim with his tusk. On the whole I am inclined to believe that where the elephant retains these huge teeth he uses them occasionally for digging in the ground. This belief is supported by the very distinct statements of such authorities as (the late) Sir Samuel Baker and Mr. F. C. Selous. The former writes "They (the acacia trees) are easily overturned by the tusks of the elephants which are driven like crowbars beneath the roots and used as levers, in which rough labour they are frequently broken . . . . It is nearly always the right tusk which is selected for this duty." Mr. Selous states that he has seen large areas of sandy soil ploughed up by the tusks of these animals in their search for roots.

Although nowhere very abundant, the ordinary two-horned rhinoceros is probably found pretty generally over all British Central Africa except on the high plateaux. But from all accounts it is absent from the south shore of Tanganyika and from the Nyasa-Tanganyika plateau. Unless, therefore, it can be proved to exist in the interior of the Moçambique district the rhinoceros will be another of those animals whose range is completely broken by the interposition of British Central Africa.<sup>1</sup> Is the so-called "white rhinoceros" (*Rhinoceros simus*) found north of the Zambezi? This is a question rather hard to answer in the negative or affirmative. I should not be surprised to hear that it was, though not within British territory but in the adjoining districts of Portuguese Zambezia. In 1892 an English trader, Mr. Harry Pettitt, gave me an extraordinary pair of horns which he had obtained in Portuguese territory to the south of the river Ruo. These horns were very similar in appearance to those of the "white rhinoceros," that is to say, both horns were of good length but the front one was extremely long, slender and directed forwards. There are specimens extant of the white rhinoceros in which the front horn is not directed forwards but is exactly vertical, or turned slightly backwards. Still I never remember to have seen a specimen of the ordinary two-horned rhinoceros which has the front horn directed forwards. The pair of horns to which I allude I sent to Mr. Sclater and I believe they are now in the British Museum.<sup>2</sup>

The zebra of British Central Africa is a singularly beautiful beast and should, if right were done, be made a type species under the name of *Equus tigrinus*<sup>3</sup> with three sub-species or varieties—*E. tigrinus burchelli*, *E. tigrinus chapmani*, and *E. tigrinus granti*, to indicate in addition to the clear and perfectly striped Central African form the three other varieties which are marred in their beauty by intermediate faint stripes, and one of which

<sup>1</sup> Abundant evidence, however, of the existence of the Rhinoceros in the vicinity of Lake Rukwa was obtained by the Rev. Harwood Nutt of the London Missionary Society.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Sclater suggests they may belong to a sub-species of Rhinoceros proposed by Dr. Gray, "Gray's Rhinoceros."

<sup>3</sup> Namely *the striped horse, par excellence.*



Sub-order, *Perissodactyla*.

*Rhinoceros bicornis*; the common African Rhinoceros.

[*Rhinoceros simus*?]; the square-lipped (white) Rhinoceros.

A pair of horns from the River Ruo was sent home in 1893 which strongly resembled those of the "white" rhinoceros.

*Equus tigrinus*; the Central African Zebra.

This I take as the type of the species of large Zebra of the plains, of which *Equus tigrinus burchelli*, *E. t. chapmani*, and *E. t. granti* are sub-species.

Sub-order, *Artiodactyla*.

*Potamochoerus johnstoni*; Johnston's Bush pig.

A connecting link between the True pigs (*Sus*) and the Bush pigs (*Potamochoerus*).

*Potamochoerus africanus*; the Bush Pig.

Allied to the Red River hog of West Africa.

*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*; the Wart Hog.

[*Giraffa camelopardalis*]; the Giraffe.

Reported to exist in the Luangwa Valley and in Ubena, N.E. of Lake Nyasa.

*Tragelaphus scriptus*, var. *roualeyni*; Gordon Cumming's Bushbuck.

The common bushbuck of South and East Africa.

*Tragelaphus angasi*; the Inyala. (P.Z.S. 1892, p. 98; 1893, p. 507 and p. 729.)

Occurs along the west side of the River Shire and also in the Lake Mweru district. This handsome Tragelaph is probably found in other parts of British Central Africa as well as in Natal and South-East Africa.

*Tragelaphus spekei*; Speke's Tragelaph.

Lives almost entirely in the water. Frequents the swamps of Bangweolo, Mweru and the River Luapula.

*Strepsiceros kudu*; the Kudu.

*Oreas canna livingstonii*; Livingstone's Eland. The white-striped Eland.

*Bos caffer*; the Cape Buffalo.

*Cephalophus grimmi*; the common Duyker Antelope.

*Oreotragus saltator*; the Klipspringer.

*Ourebia hastata*; Peters' Oribi.

[*Ourebia scoparia*?]; the Cape Oribi.

This animal is briefly recorded in our collections from Lake Chilwa by Mr. Oldfield Thomas under the name of *Nanotragus scoparius* (P.Z.S. 1894, p. 146). As he has not repeated the name in his recent list of British Central Africa mammals it may be that the specimens have since been referred to Peters' Oribi.

*Raphicerus sharpei* (*sp. nov.*); Sharpe's Steinbok.

*Cervicapra arundinum*; the Reedbuck.

*Cobus vardonii*; the Puku.

This waterbuck, of which I have horns in my collection, has been killed by Mr. Sharpe in the Luangwa Valley and in the Mweru district.

*Cobus senganus*; the Senga Puku.

A smaller species of Puku discovered by Mr. R. Crawshay in Northern Senga.



(c.) If without holding any licence under these Regulations he kills, hunts, or captures any animal whatever within a game reserve, or is found within a game reserve under such circumstances as to show that he was in pursuit of animals, and was not lawfully employed there, he shall be liable to a fine not exceeding 5*l.*, or, in default, to imprisonment for one month, without prejudice to his liability to any other penalty under this Regulation.

9. Nothing in these Regulations shall be deemed to relieve any person from the obligation of taking out any licence which for the time being is required to be taken out for possessing or using a gun.

10. The Regulations of the 9th September, 1896, for the preservation of wild game in certain parts of the Protectorate are hereby repealed.

11. These Regulations may be cited as "The Game Regulations, 1897."

## SCHEDULE I.

### GAME RESERVES.

#### 1. *The Elephant Marsh Reserve.*

Commencing at the junction of the Ruo and Shire Rivers, the boundary of the Elephant Marsh Reserve shall follow the right bank of the River Ruo as far as the Zoa Falls, and shall thence be carried along in a straight line in a north-westerly direction until it strikes the left bank of the River Shire opposite the junction of the Mwanza with the Shire; the boundary shall then cross the River Shire and follow the right bank of the Mwanza River up stream to a point distant from the Shire 12 miles in a straight line; thence the boundary shall run in a southerly direction, keeping always at a distance of 12 miles from the right bank of the Shire River until it reaches the boundary-line dividing the Lower Shire district from the Ruo. It shall then follow that boundary-line in an easterly direction until it strikes the right bank of the Shire River; the boundary shall then follow the right bank of the Shire River up stream to a point opposite the point of commencement, namely, the junction of the Shire and the Ruo Rivers.

#### 2. *The Lake Chilwa Reserve.*

Commencing at the source of the River Palombe in the Mlanje district, the boundary of the Lake Chilwa Reserve shall be carried in an easterly direction to the source of the most southern affluent of the River Sombani, and from this point shall be carried along a straight line in an easterly direction to the Anglo-Portuguese frontier, which it shall follow to the shores of Lake Chilwa. The boundary shall continue along the shore of the lake southward, westward, and northward, as far as the confluence of the Likangala River. It shall then follow the course of the Likangala River up stream as far as the eastern boundary of Messrs. Buchanan Brothers' Mlungusi estate, thence along the said eastern boundary of the said estate southwards to a point on the left bank of the Ntondwe River. It shall then follow the northern boundary of Mr. Bruce's Namasi estate eastwards until the said boundary reaches the Palombe River, thence along the right bank of the Palombe River up stream to its source.

## SCHEDULE II.

### PART I.

Wild beasts in respect of which licence (A) is required:—

Elephant.  
Rhinoceros.

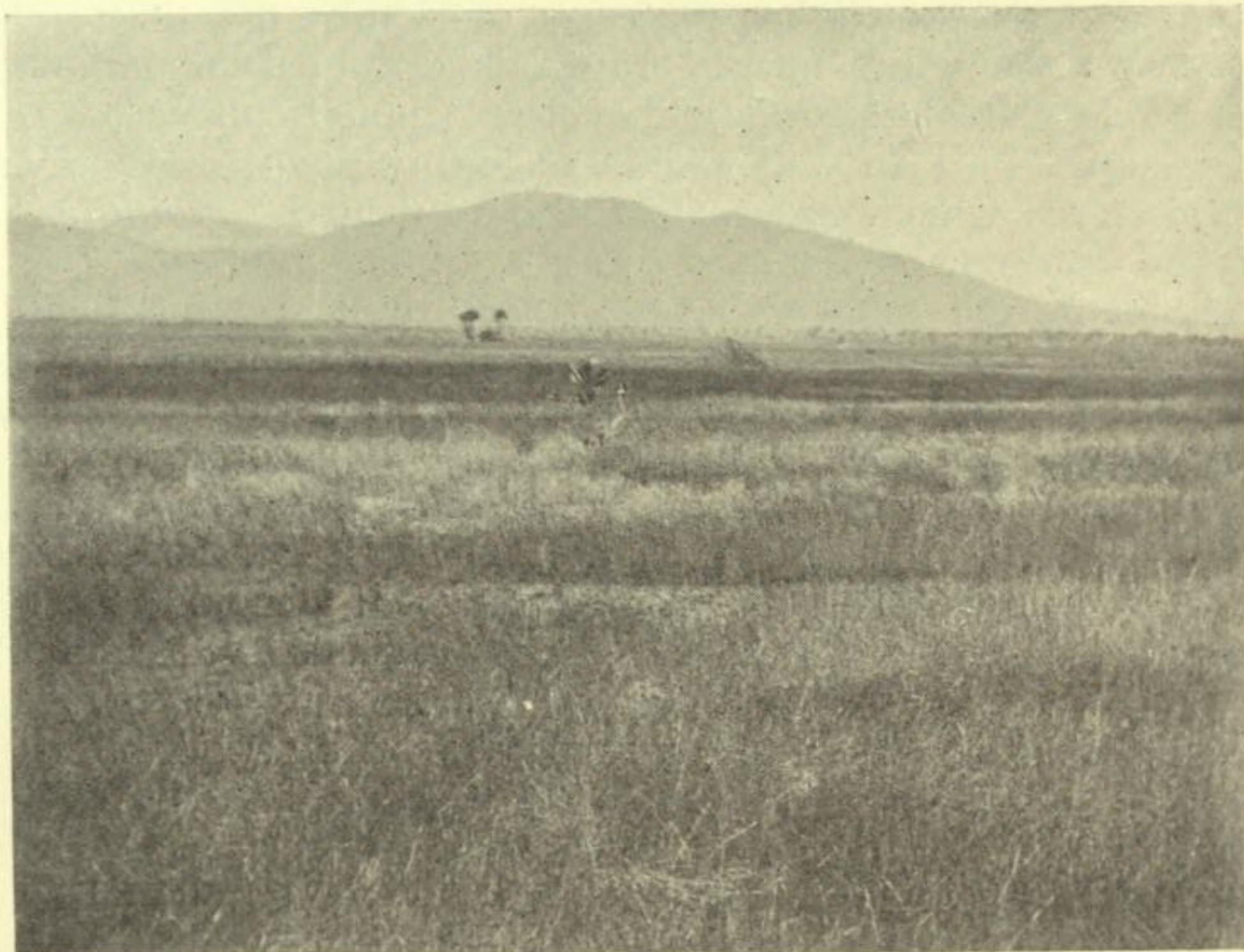
Giraffe.  
Gnu (Wildebeest).



## PART II.

Wild beasts in respect of which licence (B) or licence (C) is required:—

Zebra.	Klipspringer.
Wart hog ( <i>Phacochoerus</i> ).	Reedbuck.
Bush pig ( <i>Potamochoerus</i> ).	Puku ( <i>Cobus vardoni</i> ).
Buffalo.	Senga Puku ( <i>C. senganus</i> ).
Eland.	Lechwe ( <i>C. lechwe</i> ).
Kudu.	Crawshay's Cobus ( <i>C. crawshayi</i> ).
Situtunga ( <i>Tragelaphus spekei</i> ).	Waterbuck ( <i>C. ellipsiprymnus</i> ).
Inyala ( <i>T. angasii</i> ).	Impala ( <i>Aepyceros melampus</i> ).
Bushbuck ( <i>T. scriptus</i> ).	Hartebeest ( <i>Bubalis</i> ).
Duyker ( <i>Cephalophus</i> ).	Tsessébe ( <i>Damaliscus</i> ).
Oribi ( <i>Ourebia</i> ).	Sable antelope.
Sharpe's antelope ( <i>Raphicerus sharpei</i> ).	Roan antelope.



THE ELEPHANT MARSH

As to the Avi-fauna: it is a country singularly rich in bird life. Amongst the birds, however, occur the same curious gaps in the distribution of species and genera which are found to the south of the Zambezi and in East Africa but are wanting in this south-central part of the continent. The ostrich, and the secretary-vulture, three genera of true vultures, nearly all the genera and species of African larks and of bustards are represented in Africa south of the Zambezi, skip British Central Africa, and reappear again north of the Rufiji River extending thence northwards and westwards through East Africa, across the Sudan to Senegambia. There is a great paucity of species or genera amongst the guinea fowl; practically the only guinea fowl ordinarily found in British Central Africa is the common species, the origin of the domestic bird, though *Guttera edouardi*, the crested guinea fowl is met with near the Zambezi and on the Moçambique Coast. The sand grouse is only