

flying foxes takes place, which I have endeavoured to describe in a former paper.

The Dugong (*Halicore australis*) is still found there in considerable numbers, though I fear it is rapidly decreasing, as the chase of it in whale-boats manned by natives forms one of the great attractions of the Bay.

The blacks prefer the flesh and blubber to any other food, and the white people have found in its oil qualities similar to those of cod-liver oil, having used it successfully in some cases of consumption or debility. The native name for the Dugong is "Yungan." It is about 9 or 10 feet long when full-grown, and contains from five to eight gallons of oil. It feeds on a grass-like sea-weed growing on the large flats of the Bay, some parts of which are exposed at low water. As the tide recedes, the Dugongs retire into deeper water from the feeding-grounds. The natives tell us, that before white people came amongst them, and introduced boats and harpoons, they used to catch "yungan" by placing large nets across the channels through which they knew the animals would pass from the feeding-grounds. Since the establishment of a Pilot Station at Moreton Bay, the blacks have acquired great dexterity in the use of the whale-boat and harpoon, and are now constantly employed in the pursuit, either for themselves as food, or for Europeans, who collect the oil for sale. The chase is conducted with great caution and silence. The harpooner stands in the bow, and directs the steersman by the movement of the hand. As the Dugong must rise at intervals to blow, he endeavours to calculate the exact spot of rising, and launches the harpoon as it reaches the surface. Having only a short rope to the harpoon, the Dugong often drags the boat with considerable velocity, but is very soon exhausted.

The blacks have a grand feast over one, stripping off the whole of the flesh and blubber in one large sheet, leaving the carcass entire. Thus anyone wishing to procure skeletons entire could do so by going amongst the natives with a supply of tobacco and a little flour, as the Moreton Bay tribe has always been very friendly with the whites.

I regret to say that some entire skeletons which were being sent to England by a friend of mine, were placed with a large collection of shells in a vessel which was unfortunately burnt.

I have no doubt that the Dugong abounds in the bays and straits north of lat. 27°; but in none of these will the same facility be offered of procuring specimens as at Moreton Bay, where the blacks are so friendly, and are so well acquainted with the habits of this animal.

##### 5. THE BLACKS OF MORETON BAY AND THE PORPOISES. BY MR. FAIRHOLME.

Between the two long islands which form the south part of Moreton Bay, is a passage known as the South Passage, formerly used

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for ships entering the Bay, but now given up. Near the deserted Pilot Station at Amity Point, some of the natives may constantly be found during the warmer months of the year fishing for "Mullet," a very fine fish about the size of a mackerel. In this pursuit they are assisted in a most wonderful manner by the Porpoises. It seems that from time immemorial a sort of understanding has existed between the blacks and the Porpoises for their mutual advantage, and the former pretend to know all the Porpoises about the spot, and even have names for them.

The beach here consists of shelving sand, and near the shore are small hillocks of sand, on which the blacks sit, watching for the appearance of a shoal of Mullet. Their nets, which are used by hand, and are stretched on a frame about 4 feet wide, lie ready on the beach. On seeing a shoal, several of the men run down, and with their spears make a peculiar splashing in the water. Whether the Porpoises really understand this as a signal, or think it is the fish, it is difficult to determine, but the result is always the same; they at once come in towards the shore, driving the Mullet before them. As they near the edge, a number of the blacks with spears and hand-nets quickly divide to the right and left, and dash into the water. The Porpoises being outside the shoal, numbers of fish are secured before they can break away. In the scene of apparent confusion that takes place, the blacks and Porpoises are seen splashing about close to each other. So fearless are the latter, that strangers, who have expressed doubts as to their tameness, have often been shown that they will take a fish from the end of a spear, when held to them.

For my own part I cannot doubt that the understanding is real, and that the natives know these Porpoises, and that strange Porpoises would not show so little fear of the natives. The oldest men of the tribe say that the same kind of fishing has always been carried on as long as they can remember.

Porpoises abound in the Bay, but in *no other part* do the natives fish with their assistance.

## 6. MOLLUSCA NOVA COLLECTIONIS CUMINGIANÆ, DESCRIPTA A GUILIELMO DUNKER, MARBURGENSI.

### 1. TROCHUS FLAVIDUS.

*Tr. testa conica, solidula, unicolore pallide flavida, nitida; apice acuto, granoso; anfractibus lævigatis planis 10, infera superaque suturæ parte cingulo elevato instructis; striis incrementi tenerrimis; anfractu ultimo obtuse angulato; basi convexiuscula sulcis quinque notata; apertura subtetragona.*

Patria ignota.

Species *Trocho dubio*, Phil., affinis est, qui vero colore olivaceo, pictura albo vel rufo flammulata, testa majore et latiore, anfractu ultimo magis angulato statim dignoscitur. Specimen, quod esset unicum 5 lin. altum, 4½ latum est.