

Kirk, T. 1880

Description of a New Species of Palinurus.

By T. W. Kirk.

INVERTEBRATE
ZOOLOGY
Crustacea

1880

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1880

only seen a newspaper cutting, and have not been able to obtain particulars.

5. A fifth was found by Mr. Moore, near Flat Point, East Coast. A description was sent to Mr. Beetham, M.H.R., who, I believe, intends communicating it to this Society.

It will be seen by the above notice that there are at least two species of "Giant Cephalopods" on our coast, as the Waimarama specimen had only eight arms, while those captured at Cape Campbell and Wellington were true Decapods.

I would take this opportunity of recording my thanks to the three young gentlemen who brought news into town of the stranding of the Lyall Bay specimen.

ART. XLIV.—*Description of a new Species of Palinurus.* By T. W. KIRK, Assistant in the Colonial Museum.

Plate XI.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 21st February, 1880.]

THE specimen described in this paper was obtained by Mr. J. Buchanan, F.L.S., in December, 1877, at Whaingaroa, a small harbour on the West Coast of the North Island. It was placed in the Colonial Museum, and until lately bore the label "*Palinurus hugelii* var. *tumidus*," in the handwriting of Dr. Hector, by whom it has since been entrusted to me for description.

In general appearance, this fine species approaches very near *P. hugelii*, from the Indian Ocean, and might at first be mistaken for it; I have, however, carefully compared our specimen with Dr. Heller's description of *P. hugelii*,* and it appears to me to possess characters sufficiently distinct to justify its elevation to the rank of a species.

I therefore propose to retain Dr. Hector's MS. name, and designate the new species "*Palinurus tumidus*," although perhaps, *giganteus*, would be quite as appropriate, the total length from the tip of the beak to the end of the telson being 24 inches, the carapace very much swollen and measuring 21½ inches in circumference.

Dr. Hector informs me that this is the common crawfish at the Sydney market, yet, strange to say, although so large and so common, it does not appear to have been described, the only attempt made to identify it being found in the Sydney Museum, where a specimen bears the label "*Palinurus hugelii* ?."

* See Reise der Oesterreichischen Fregatte Novara, Crustaceen, p. 96, tab. VIII.

Palinurus tumidus, sp. nov.

Carapace beaked, much swollen, armed with very blunt spines, or rather spine-knobs, some directed forward, others, again, standing nearly vertical; a double row of small, stout, blunt spines, standing nearly vertical, runs along the posterior edge of the carapace. Beak stout, round, and curved upwards. Supra-orbital spines stout, compressed, turned upwards. Antennæ spines stout, somewhat triangular in shape, and also turned upwards. Superior antennæ less than the total length of the animal, peduncle armed on its upper and outer surface with stout spines. Inferior antennæ smooth, longer than peduncle of superior.

Anterior legs very stout, inferior margin of second joint armed with a row of five or six spines; third joint with a very stout spine at the anterior and also at the posterior extremity, the anterior twice the size of the posterior, also a stout triangular spine on the superior distal extremity; fifth joint with a row of six spines on the superior internal angle, the largest and posterior one being directed backwards to meet the anterior spine of the third joint, a row of three small blunt spines on the inferior internal angle. Superior margin of the distal extremity of the third joint of the last four pairs of legs armed with a spine.

Abdomen very coarsely granulated and punctated. Tail, especially the telson, armed with small spines; telson rounded at the extremity.

Anterior margin of each segment of the abdomen produced into a very prominent spine, backed by three or four teeth.

Whole animal destitute of hair, with the exception of the pedipalps, and the inferior surface of the terminal joint of each pair of legs.

Colour, reddish brown, tinged in many places with yellow.

Length, 24 inches.

Distinguished from *P. hugelii* by its much larger size, by the beak, supra-orbital and antennæ spines being turned upwards, by the telson being less triangular, and rounded instead of scarped.

PLATE XI. represents *Palinurus tumidus*. *a.* Dorsal view. *b.* Inferior surface of anterior leg, showing armature.

ART. XLV.—*Description of a new Species of Lizard of the Genus Naultinus.*

By W. L. BULLER, C.M.G., Sc.D., F.R.S.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 10th January, 1880.]

THE lizard described in this paper was obtained in August last by Mr. Joseph Annabell while engaged on a Government survey in the wooded country of the Wanganui district. It is an interesting form, belonging to a well known

group of tree-lizards, whose colours and markings, for protective purposes, bear a strong resemblance to their natural surroundings. The bright green tints of one species enables it almost to defy detection amidst the evergreen foliage of the native shrubs; the marbled-brown skin of another is peculiarly adapted for concealment as it clings to the bark of a tree, or hides in the crevices; whilst a third, which inhabits the sulphur-crusts on the grounds in the Lake District, is of a uniform bright sulphur-yellow.

The species described by the author of this paper is beautifully marked on its upper surface with patches of pale brown and minute granulations of yellow, exactly resembling in appearance a peculiar *Lichen* common on the bark of certain trees. Apart from good specific characters, it furnishes another remarkable instance of the law of assimilative colouring referred to.

ART. XLVI.—*Notes on Fishes in Upper Whanganui River.*

By Captain MAIR, F.L.S.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society 10th January, 1880.]

DURING the summer and autumn rains, large quantities of fish are caught by the Natives in weirs or single lines of stakes driven into the bed of the river at the heads of the rapids, and placed at an angle of about 10 degrees across the current. These lines of stakes are 50 feet or 60 feet long, and 15 yards or 20 yards apart, according to the width of the river. *Hinakis* or wicker baskets are placed at the bottom of each row of stakes, and the fish, which appear always to swim down the middle of the river, upon meeting these lines of stakes placed at a slight angle to the stream, follow them down into the funnel-mouthed *hinakis* aforesaid, and are thus caught. As soon as the pot is full, it is replaced by an empty one. In this manner, I saw about 7 cwt. obtained from two *hinakis*, at Whenuatere, on February 25th, 1879. The fish so obtained are:—*Papanoko*, *Toitoti*, *Inanga*, *Atutahi*, *Upokororo*, and a peculiar kind of eel called *Tunakeke*.

Papanoko are small fish, from six to eight inches in length, and very deep in proportion, as the accompanying rough sketch will show, and weigh about the eighth of a pound. At this season of the year they are very fat, full of spawn, and are most delicious eating. The fins are red; scales very small; back, pepper-and-salt colour; belly, silvery. This fish is called *Te ika huna a Tanemahuta*—the hidden fish of Tane—the god of the forests; for they are never found in the streams or rivers, unless during a flood, and then only during the night. Great ceremony is observed in cooking them, and they are taken some distance from the village for the purpose. The natives aver that if this were not done, no more fish would enter the *hinakis*.

Toitoi are a small blue fish similar to those caught in lakes, but larger. They are fair eating, but rather full of bones—quite unlike the *Papanako*, which have hardly any.

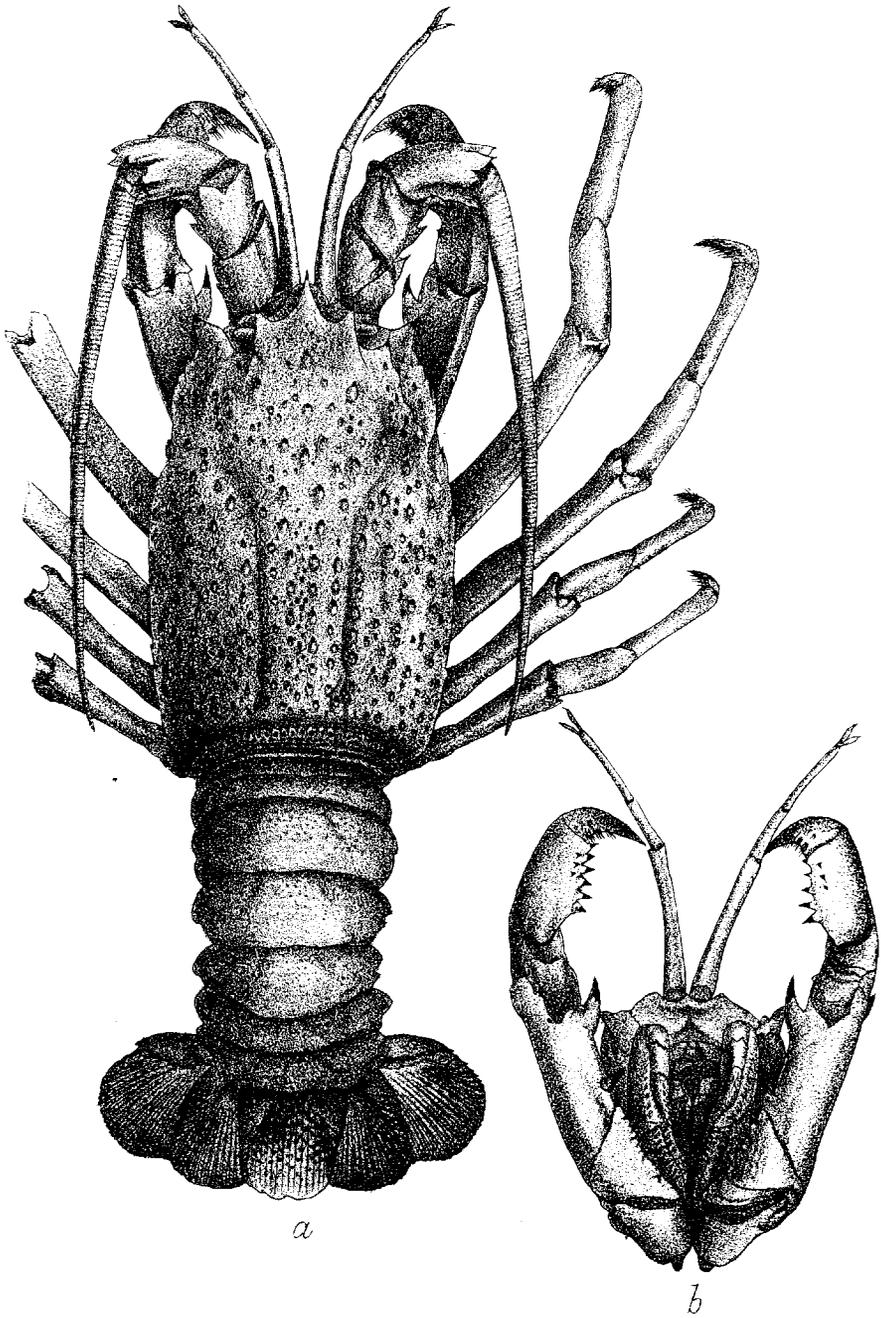
Inanga are plentiful. A large kind, called *Atutahi*, are most esteemed as food; they are almost 5 inches in length, and quite transparent.

Upokororo are plentiful during the first winter months, also lamprey; but the latter are only caught on the lower part of the river.

The eel most prized by the natives is called *Tunaheke*. The name implies that it comes from the sources of the rivers, and goes to the sea. It is a very fine fish, varying from 1–10 lbs. in weight; is bluish-black, with flat head, very small mouth and teeth, tail very wide in proportion to the body; but the most remarkable features are its large, deep, blue eyes. It is very strong and active, and can jump out of a canoe. The natives keep them in large wicker-work baskets, placed in the small streams, for many months, feeding them upon boiled potatoes which keep them in good condition. These fish are supposed to come out of the swamps during heavy floods. It is remarkable that they are never caught except during rains, and do not readily take bait.

Where the Ohura river joins the Whanganui, there is a fall of almost 36 feet. In December and January millions of small eels, from 2–5 inches in length and the thickness of a steel knitting-needle, may be seen crawling up the face of the overhanging rock, whenever there is sufficient moisture. At the time of my visit (February 27th) the season was over; yet we caught a great many, between nine and ten o'clock at night, by brushing them into a net with a whisp of fern. It was most interesting to see these little creatures wriggling up the fall in solid masses, apparently hanging on to each other; for if you swept away two or three at the head of the column the remainder all fell back into the water. *Tunariki* are considered a great delicacy by the natives, who hang funnels (shaped like a dunce's cap) made of flax, over the falls, into which these little creatures creep till it is quite full, they are then emptied into baskets. Two or three hundredweight are frequently caught in one night in this manner.

Large *Patiki* (flat fish) are occasionally speared up the river. Formerly they were very plentiful and were caught in nets.



PALINURUS TUMIDUS sp. nov.

J.B. Ath.

