

LLOYD'S NATURAL HISTORY.

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A HAND-BOOK

TO THE

CARNIVORA.

PART I.

CATS, CIVETS, AND MUNGOOSE.

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root of the anterior upper pre-molar tooth, as well as by the incomplete closure of the socket of the eye by bone. The fur of the type specimen is described as being of a bright chestnut hue, becoming paler on the under-parts, while the limbs and tail are both redder and paler. The elongate and tapering tail has a whitish median streak down the terminal half of its lower surface, this streak expanding and becoming pure white at the tip, which is marked by a small black spot. The rounded ears have short blackish-brown fur on the outer side, while internally they are pale brown, with narrow pale margins. The sides of the upper lips, as well as a spot at the front angle, and another at the edge of the eyelid are pale brown; while the chin, the margin of the lower jaw, and the gullet are whitish.

Distribution.—Borneo.

Originally described by the late Dr. Gray upon the evidence of a very imperfect skin preserved in the British Museum, this Cat is now known from several specimens obtained by Mr. Everett, and another procured by Mr. Hose on the Suai River in Sarawak. Nothing seems to have been recorded of its habits.

XIV. THE FISHING CAT. *FELIS VIVERRINA*.

Felis viverrina, Bennett, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1833, p. 68; Elliot, Monogr. Felidæ, pl. xxii. (1878-83); Blanford, Mamm. Brit. India, p. 76 (1888).

Felis himalayana, Jardine, Naturalist's Library, Felinæ, p. 230 (1834).

Felis viverriceps, Hodgson, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, vol. v. p. 232 (1836).

Leopardus viverrinus, Gray, List Mamm. Brit. Mus. p. 43 (1843).

Felis celidogaster, Blyth, Cat, p. 61 (1863; *nec* Temminck).

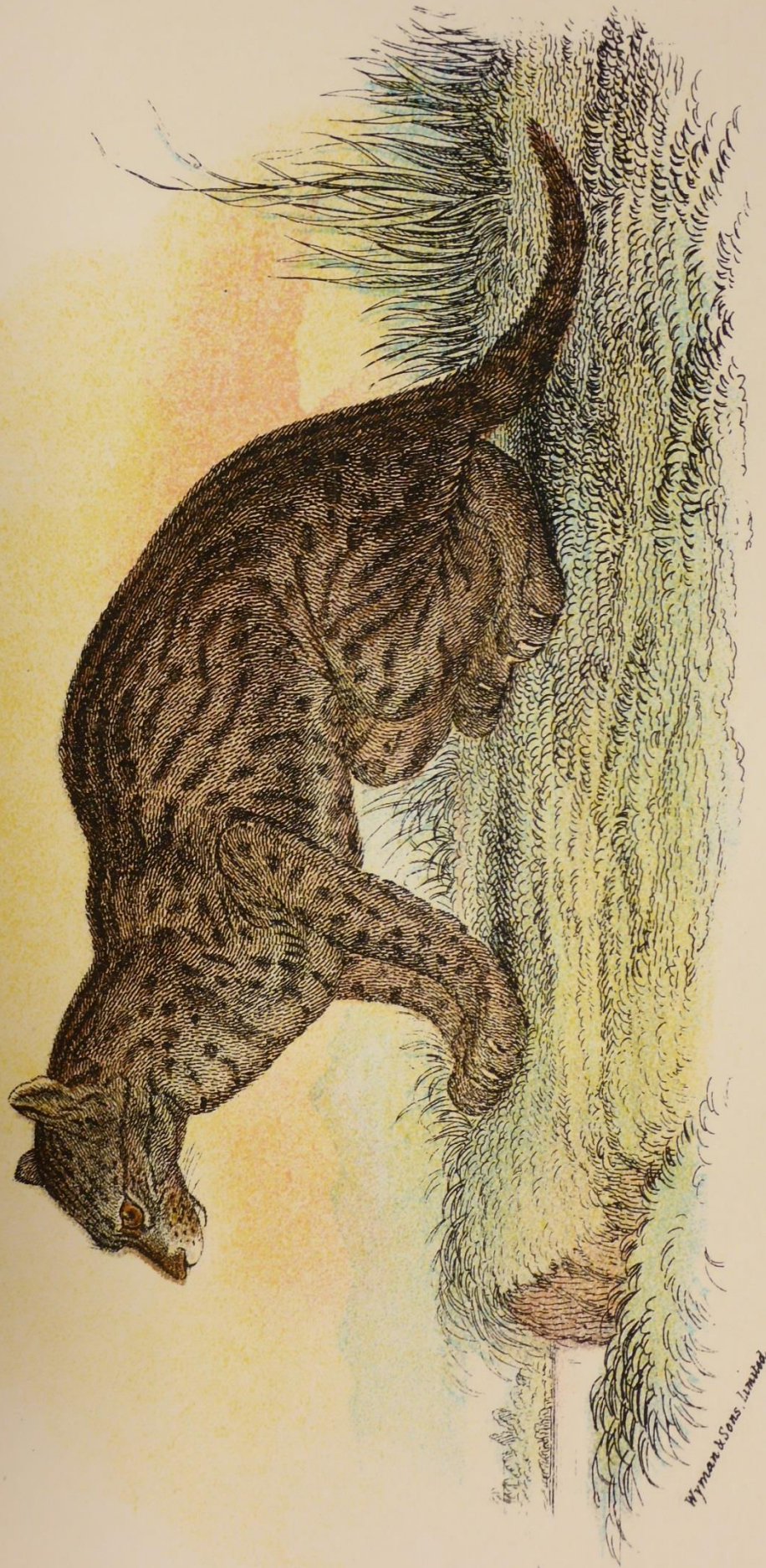
Viverriceps bennettii, Gray, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1867, p. 268; id., Cat. Carniv. Mamm. Brit. Mus. p. 16 (1869).

(Plate XI.)

Characters.—Coming under the denomination of a “spotted” Cat, this species may be distinguished from the larger Indian forms with the same general type of coloration by its inferior dimensions, and the sharp ridge formed by the nasal bones of the skull. Superior in size to the undermentioned Leopard-Cat and Rusty-spotted Cat, it differs from both by the grizzled grey fur of the upper-parts being marked with dark brown spots formed by broken-up longitudinal lines, passing into small blackish spots on the hind-quarters. The short and thick tail is marked above with dark brown bars, and is about one-third the length of the head and body. The nasal region of the skull is remarkably narrow, and the socket of the eye generally completely surrounded by bone. The anterior upper pre-molar tooth is very small. Length of head and body, from 30 to 32 inches; of tail, 9 to 12 inches. Specimens are occasionally met with in which the ground-colour of the fur is reddish-grey.

The specimen herewith figured, which was described by Jardine under the name of *Felis himalayana*, and has the spots more confluent into streaks than is generally the case, was identified by Dr. Gray with his so-called *Pardalina warwicki*. The latter, although really identical with the South American Geoffroy's Cat, described in the sequel, was supposed to come from Asia; and the similarity between the coloration of the present species and that of the latter is not a little remarkable.

Distribution.—India, Ceylon, Lower Burma, Tenasserim, Formosa, and Southern China. In India the species has been recorded from the valley of the Indus, the outer ranges of the Himalaya, the Nipal Terai, Assam, Bengal, and it, perhaps,



inhabits the Malabar and Travancore coasts ; but in Central India it appears to be unknown.

Habits.—A dweller in the thickets and jungles, on the borders of marshes, rivers, and tidal creeks, this Cat differs remarkably from the great majority of its kindred by its habit of preying upon fish ; although the manner in which it catches them appears to be quite unknown. This trait has given rise to its popular name, while its scientific title has been derived from its somewhat Civet-like coloration and general appearance. In addition to fish, this Cat is stated to feed largely on the large amphibious snails known as *Ampullariæ*, to be met with in thousands in every marsh or "jhil" in Lower Bengal ; but here, again, we have no information as to how the succulent morsels are extracted from their somewhat solid shells. Probably also small mammals, birds, and reptiles contribute to the diet of this Cat ; while, in spite of its comparatively small size, it is known to be in the habit of killing sheep and calves. Extreme ferocity is, indeed, a distinctive trait of the Fishing Cat, although, somewhat curiously, when captured, this species is stated to be tamed with facility.

An observer, quoted by Mr. Sterndale in his work on the Mammalia of India, writes : "A pair of these Cats broke one night into a matted house, and went off with a brace of ewes, which had a half-a-dozen lambs between them, born only a short time before their mothers met their end. I have caught this species in traps, and when let loose in an indigo-vat with a miscellaneous pack of Dogs, they have invariably fought hard, and at times proved too much for their canine adversaries, so that I have had to go to their rescue, and put an end to the fight by a spear-thrust or a heavy blow on the back of the head with a stout stick. Some years ago one got into my fowl-house at night, and as I opened the door to go inside, it made a fierce jump at me from a perch on the opposite side."