

contact along the ventral margin for half the length of the shell, the left valve slightly overlapping the right. Colour a uniform dull white. Epidermis pale straw colour, largely abraded, thin and very wrinkled. Sculpture about thirty concentric growth laminae in the interstices of which are two or three raised hair lines; anteriorly these laminae are puckered up into lines of square-headed thorns by transverse waves radiating from the beaks. Opposite the beaks the thorny ridges diminish for a few series and cease, posteriorly they are represented by faint wrinkles on the growth laminae. Beaks situated at a quarter of the length of the shell from the anterior extremity. Hinge margin narrow, sharply recurved, not appressed to the valve and destitute of such denticles as possessed by *P. dactylus*. Dorsal plate lanceolate, single, entire, striated by divaricating growth lines, with a shallow median furrow. Subumbonal process long, flat and curved. Length 40, height 20, breadth 16 mm.

Attached to some specimens are pale brown, tough, coriaceous siphon sheaths.

*Type*.—In the Australian Museum, Sydney.

The specimens on which my description is based were collected by Mr. Brazier in a small outcrop of shale at Vacluse Bay. That gentleman informs me that he also encountered the species at "The Nobbys," near Newcastle, and at the mouth of the Bellinger River, some examples attaining twice the dimensions of those now recorded.

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## NOTES ON AUSTRALIAN TYPHLOPIDÆ.

By EDGAR R. WAITE, F.L.S.

### 1. TYPHLOPS CURTUS, *Ogilby*.

It is worthy of remark that no one in Australia has hitherto investigated the *Typhlopidae* of the continent: the reason probably lies in the fact that only a very small portion of this immense area can be said to be at all adequately known, and scientific workers have ample material of more attractive and better differentiated forms than characterise the *Typhlopidae*. Although of all snakes this group is admitted to be the most difficult of determination, some fifteen Australian species are known; all these have, however, been described in Europe: by Gray and

Boulenger in London, Peters in Berlin, Schmidt in Hamburg, Schlegel in Leyden, and Jan in Milan: consequently all the type specimens are in Europe, and without direct reference to these the task of determination is no light one; it is, however, a pity that such valuable material as the large collection of local *Typhlopidae* contained in the Australian Museum should remain year after year uninvestigated, and in taking up the examination of these specimens I therefore propose to publish any points of interest with which I may meet, in the hope that it may be a step in the direction of placing our knowledge of the Australian *Typhlopidae* more on a level with better worked families.

The Collection in the Museum, although large, is, as might naturally be expected, somewhat local, being composed mainly of individuals collected in New South Wales, more particularly in the neighbourhood of Sydney. As only a few of the species described have been obtained from this Colony, any specimens from other parts of Australia with which we might be favored would be especially valuable.

In this connection I may mention that the Trustees of the Macleay Museum, Sydney, have very kindly granted me permission to examine the extensive collection of *Typhlopidae* formed by the late Hon. Sir William Macleay; and Mr. C. W. de Vis has generously offered to place in my hands, for investigation, the examples contained in the Queensland Museum of which he is the Curator.

Only one species has, I believe, been described in Australia, and it is therefore disappointing to have to point out its identity with a species previously described.

In all the *Typhlopidae*, so far as I am aware, the body scales are arranged in an *even* transverse series. In the "Records of the Australian Museum," Vol. ii., p. 23, Mr. J. Douglas Ogilby describes a species under the name of *Typhlops curtus*, and remarks that it has *twenty-three* series of scales round the middle of the body. This apparent departure from the usual conditions led me to re-examine the type specimen, when I found the number to be *twenty-four*. The species must therefore be referred to *Typhlops ligatus*, Peters,\* with which it agrees in every particular. Peters obtained his specimen from Port Mackay. Ogilby's type is from Walsh River, Gulf of Carpentaria, and I have found in the Museum Collection other examples from Coomoooolaroo, Dawson River. Therefore, so far as is known, this species is confined to Queensland.

[I have submitted the foregoing note to Mr. Ogilby, who entirely agrees with my remarks, and was not aware of Peters' paper when he wrote his description.]

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\* Monatsb. d. K. Akad. d. W. Berlin, 1879, p. 775, fig. 3.