

**SKETCH OF THE NATURAL  
HISTORY  
OF YARMOUTH AND  
ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD**

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Sketch of the Natural History of Yarmouth and Its Neighbourhood by C. J. Paget & James Paget

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**C. J. PAGET & JAMES PAGET**

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*from the Authors*

SKETCH

OF THE

NATURAL HISTORY

OF

YARMOUTH

AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD,

CONTAINING

Catalogues of the Species

OF

ANIMALS, BIRDS, REPTILES, FISH, INSECTS, AND  
PLANTS, AT PRESENT KNOWN.

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BY C. J. AND JAMES PAGET.

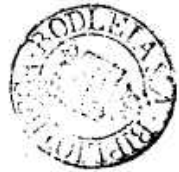
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ERRATUM.—Page 22, for *Anthophagus nuchicornis*, read *Oonthophagus nuchicornis*.



## INTRODUCTION.

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It is sincerely hoped, that the name given to the present work will be interpreted literally—at nothing more than a mere “Sketch” does it aim; nor were the motives which induced its publication any but of the most unpretending description. They were founded on the idea that it might be useful; first, by adding another to the number of local histories necessary to a perfect acquaintance with that of the whole kingdom, and with the particular distribution of each species; and, secondly, that other persons residing in the town may, when the number and excellence of the productions of their own neighbourhood are in some measure pointed out, be led more diligently to pursue their investigation than hitherto, while those only casually visiting it, may be enabled more easily to procure specimens of the several rarities. Should these purposes be even inadequately fulfilled, its intention will be accomplished, more especially if it excite a spirit of research, by the assistance of which the Sketch may at some future period be filled up.

It may be useful at the outset, briefly to describe the character of the localities in which the species hereafter mentioned occur, as well as to give some general directions respecting the mode in which they may best be procured.



The town stands on a peninsula, formed between the sea on the east, and the river Yare on the west, which, at this part, runs nearly parallel to the beach; to the south, a line of cliffs extends from the Haven's-mouth for several miles along the coast, past Gorleston, Corton, Gunton, Lowestoft, Pakefield, &c., of the average height of about thirty feet, composed principally of disrupted crag, sand, and clay, beneath which has occasionally been laid bare a stratum of blue clay, the wreck of the Lias. The sand is derived from the abrasion of the flints belonging to the chalk strata, the upper edges of which constitute the Holm, Corton, and Scroby sands, upon which the sand permanently rests. In these cliffs, besides fragments of different shells of the crag stratum, very interesting remains of the mammoth have been occasionally met with, and lately, a considerable portion of the head of a beaver was found in Corton cliff, and is now in the possession of the Rev. G. R. Leathes, of Shropham, Norfolk.

Along the coast to the north of the town, runs a range of low hills of blown sand, bound together by the creeping roots of the marram and other grasses, extending from Caistor to beyond Happisburgh, passing the different villages of Ormesby, Hemsby, Winterton, &c. The North and South Denes, or Downs, are portions of this range, lying nearer to the town, and on either side of it, and are much more level than the rest, which are usually called Marrams. To the west of the town is the great alluvial flat, once the bed of the *Garienis Ostium*, whose sub-soil consists of alternate layers of moor and silt, accumulated when the sea had free ingress to these parts; remains of this fine estuary now exist in the various broads, or small lakes, at Fritton, Rollesby, Filby,

and other places, at greater distances, but more especially in that, at the junction of the Yare, Waveney, and Bure, hereafter so often mentioned by the name of Breydon. The rest now more or less completely laid dry, constitutes a continuous tract of marshes, miles in extent, stretching all round the west of the town, almost down to the very verge of the cliffs and sand-hills before mentioned. The character of these marshes is in some measure modified according as the water which flows by them, and with which they are occasionally inundated, is salt or fresh; but as there is no regular boundary to the distance to which the water of the sea is carried up the river by the flood tide, no line can be drawn between them. In general, however, those mentioned in the different parishes of Caistor, Cobham, Runham, Bradwell, and Burgh, may be considered salt marshes. For further geological information reference must be made to the various works already published on that department of the natural history of the county, by Mr. Woodward, Mr. Robberds, Mr. Taylor, &c., where a variety of most interesting points, connected with the previous condition and probable results of the changes taking place in this part of the kingdom, will be found fully treated. The first of the above gentlemen, kindly offered a much more detailed account of the neighbourhood than is here given, but as it is hoped that he will soon publish a second and enlarged edition of his "Outlines of the Geology of Norfolk," containing both this and much other matter of considerable interest, the reader is referred to that work for it.

From the above description, slight as it is, it may be easily imagined, that the surface of the country pre-

sents an appearance of monotony, which would but ill accord with any pretensions to variety of natural productions. The almost continuous tract of marsh and water is broken only by cultivated lands, which have for the most part been rescued from them, a process of change which is still rapidly going on. By the improved banking of the rivers, marshes formerly inundated, are now laid dry, and by the drainage so universally and effectually carried on, deep bogs are constantly, though slowly, converted into the finest and most fertile fields. From such causes principally arise those changes, which, it will be found, have in the course of years taken place in the natural productions of the district.

With the exception of the small thickets at the margins of some of the broads, and the carrs, or small woods, composed principally of the alder and willows, here and there interspersed with the birch, which are irregularly scattered over the swampy parts of the marshes, and which seldom cover more than an acre or two of ground, nothing deserving the name of a wood exists within the space treated of in this volume, viz. ten miles in each direction.

The effects produced by the above conditions on the various classes of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, will be more advantageously described, when each of them in turn comes to be mentioned. The following particulars, however, relative to the climate of the district, may be useful in facilitating investigations into the causes of the range of species, especially of the plants. They are a portion of the results of Mr. C. G. Harley's observations, made during upwards of the last thirty-six years in this town; the heats being the average of obser-