

**LIST OF THE SPECIMENS OF
CETACEA IN THE
ZOOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT
OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM**

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William Henry Flower

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BY
WILLIAM HENRY FLOWER, LL.D., F.R.S.

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PREFACE.

THE Collection of skeletons, skulls, and other portions of Cetacea in the British Museum, at present the most complete in existence, was brought together mainly in consequence of the zeal with which the late Dr. Gray, Keeper of the Zoological Department, pursued the study of this interesting, but formerly much neglected, group of animals.

It was upon this collection that Dr. Gray's numerous works on the Cetacea, including those published by the Trustees of the Museum in the form of Catalogues*, were based—works which are indispensable to all zoologists wishing to become acquainted with the Order of Mammals to which they refer.

As, however, recent advances in knowledge have made great modifications in the views which were held by Dr. Gray as to the classification and nomenclature of the species, it seemed very desirable that the Collection should be thoroughly re-examined, and arranged and named in accordance with the ideas derived from the fuller and more critical state of knowledge of the present time, while retaining references to all the published descriptions and figures of the specimens, and to the various names under which many of them have appeared at successive periods of their history.

It will be observed that the principle adopted in determining the number of species admitted into this List is the reverse of that of Dr. Gray, and may possibly have erred in the opposite direction. As species have not generally been recognized as such unless presenting constant distinguishing characters capable of definition, it is probable that, in the imperfect state of knowledge of many forms, some may have been grouped together which a fuller acquaintance with

* Catalogue of Cetacea, 1850. Catalogue of Seals and Whales, 1866. Supplement to Catalogue of Seals and Whales, 1871.

all parts of their structure, external and internal, will show to be distinct. But in some cases, as in the genus *Delphinus*, Dr. Gray's distinctions, founded on size alone, have been allowed to stand provisionally at least, in the absence of more information as to the extent of variation which may be attained in groups of individuals to which the term "specific" may be legitimately applied.

The List contains very nearly all the well-established species of the Order, the only notable deficiency being *Rhachianectes glaucus*, a whalebone whale of the North Pacific. Many species are, however, very imperfectly represented in the Collection, either by a single specimen or by a skull or other still smaller fragment of its organization. The largest of all known mammals, *Balenoptera sibbaldii*, is represented only by the skeleton of a specimen scarcely more than half-grown; one of the most important forms, remarkable for the strange modification of the mammalian type of structure which it exhibits, and for the commercial interests involved in its capture, the Greenland Right Whale (*Balæna mysticetus*), by a skull in a very dilapidated condition; *Berardius arnuxii*, a large Ziphioid whale of the South Seas, by a single tooth. Of nearly every species a larger number of specimens is required to exhibit the extent of individual variation, and the modifications due to age, sex, or locality.

It is hoped that the publication of this List, by showing the deficiencies of the Collection, will aid in making it still more complete.

British Museum
(Natural History),
May 1st, 1885.

W. H. FLOWER,
Director.

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LIST
or
CETACEA.

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Family I. *BALÆNIDÆ*.

1. *BALÆNA*.

Balæna, *Linna. Syst. Nat.* ed. 12, i. p. 105 (1766).

1. *Balæna mysticetus*.

(Greenland Right Whale.)

Balæna mysticetus, *Linna. l. c.*

- a.* Skull. (338 *a.*)
In Museum since the last century. Figured by Cuvier, *Oss. Foss.* 2^{me} édit. v. pl. xxv. figs. 9, 10, & 11 (1823).
- b.* Left scapula. (338 *c.*)
Purchased.
- c.* Imperfect right tympanic bone. (338 *b*—48. 10. 12. 27.)
Purchased, 1848.
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From a different individual. Purchased, 1848.
- e.* Pair of tympanic bones.
Lidth-de-Jeude Collection. Purchased, 1867.
- f.* Pair of tympanic bones. (338 *j.*)
One of these is figured by Gray (*P. Z. S.* 1864, p. 201, and *Cat. Seals and Whales*, p. 86, fig. 5, 1866) as *B. mysticetus*, var.