

PALEONTOLOGY

New Fossils Shed Light On Prehistoric Animal Life

Thousand Rare Specimens, Including Primate Skulls, Are Discovered in Wyoming by Expedition of National Museum

MORE THAN 1,000 specimens of fossilized skeletal remains, study of which will shed new light on animal life 50,000,000 years ago, have been discovered in Wyoming by C. W. Gilmore, curator of paleontology at the National Museum.

Mr. Gilmore has just returned from Big Horn Basin in western Wyoming, where he has been at the head of a Museum expedition engaged in paleontologic exploration.

"We discovered 1,076 specimens, many of which are new to science," he said. "When they are studied, I expect that much new knowledge of mammalian life during the Eocene period will be made available to paleontologists and scientists in general."

Chief among the discoveries are about 600 jaws of various mammals. Included among them are specimens of jaws of horses, primates, cat-like mammals, and other specimens yet to be identified.

These jaws are of very high value scientifically, Mr. Gilmore said. They all belong to mammals of the Eocene period, the time which marks the beginning of modern mammalian life. They will give the museum the first representative collections of such specimens in its history.

First Skeleton for Museum

Unusual among the finds are several parts of *Diatryma*, a huge bird standing nearly six feet tall. Although it is not a new discovery, it is interesting scientifically because it is seldom that any one region is prolific enough to yield more than one part a season.

Parts of four or five *Caryphodons*, the largest mammal of the Eocene period, were discovered. Enough parts were found to construct a complete skeleton, it is believed. This will be the first of its kind ever assembled by the museum, and one of the few in the world. The beasts looked rather like hippopotami.

One of the most exceptional finds

was the complete skeleton of a *Pachyaena*, a cat-like mammal about as big as the largest living tigers. Although parts of this skeleton have been found before, this is the first time a complete formation has come to light.

The complete skull of what appears to be a primate, or member of the ape family, may prove to be the most unusual and valuable find of the entire trip. Mr. Gilmore is not yet certain what type of primate it represents, but he believes there is a possibility that the discovery will prove to be a prize of great scientific value.

The entire collection, totaling more than two tons in weight, is now en route to the museum in 15 large boxes.

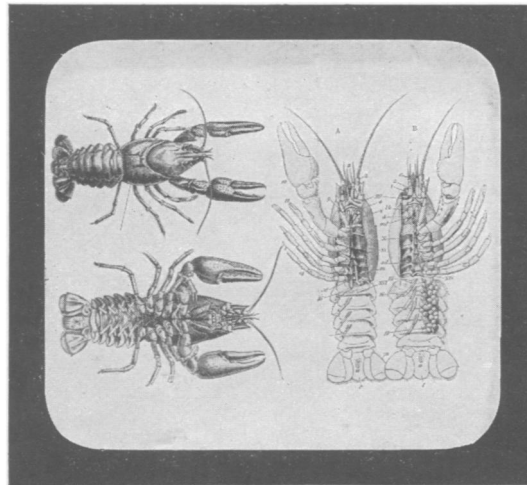
Science News Letter, September 5, 1931



DIATRYMA

A bird-monster built like a thick-legged ostrich with the head of an enormous hawk. Several fossilized parts of this strange creature were among the finds of the National Museum whose expedition to Wyoming has just returned. Although the discovery is not new, it is scientifically interesting because seldom is one region prolific enough to yield more than one part a season.

LANTERN SLIDES



No. B6621—Slide D7-25

FOR
Botany,
Zoology,
Biology,
Morphology,
Heredity
AND
Physics

Ask for Bulletin B24SL

CENTRAL SCIENTIFIC COMPANY
LABORATORY AND SUPPLIES
Apparatus and Chemicals
NEW YORK - BOSTON - CHICAGO - TORONTO - LOS ANGELES