## PHASCOLOMYS LASIORHINUS, Gould.

Hairy-nosed Wombat.

The arrival in this country of two or three living examples of a species of Wombat with the very remarkable character of a hairy muzzle has naturally excited as much interest among our own naturalists as its recent discovery had done among those of Australia. Both Mr. Angas and Professor M'Coy have forwarded lengthened papers respecting it for publication in the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London,' and both those gentlemen were of opinion that the new Wombat was identical with the P. latifrons of Owen, who many years since had applied that specific term to a skull in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields, but of which no skin had ever been received; and notwithstanding what I have said in my account of the preceding species, I should have considered that Mr. Angas and Professor M'Coy were correct in their conclusion, had not one of the animals sent to this country died, and thus afforded an opportunity of comparing its skull with that in the College Museum above mentioned. On this being done, it was found that the two skulls did not agree; and I believe I am at liberty to say that Mr. Flower, who has charge of the collection, is of opinion that they could never be considered as belonging to the same species. Under these circumstances, I had no alternative but to give the Hairy-nosed Wombat a distinctive specific appellation; and, at the suggestion of Dr. Sclater, I have assigned to it that of lasiorhinus. This course, however, will not prevent me from giving the remarks of my friends M'Coy and Angas, which indeed will have the more interest as descriptive of this new and extraordinary animal.

"I have lately," says Mr. Angas, "had an opportunity of examining a living full-grown male example of a Wombat, in the Botanical Gardens in Adelaide, which, on comparing it with adult specimens of the Tasmanian Wombat, I find to be quite distinct from that species."

"The fur of the latter is very rough and coarse, of a dark grizzly grey; ears quite small, blackish brown outside, whitish internally; nose nearly black, and more pointed than that of the former, giving to the face an expression slightly resembling the 'Koala,' whereas the other presents a bold, bull-dog-like aspect from the greater expansion of his face and width of nostrils. The general aspect of *P. Wombat* is more bear-like: in standing, it arches its back considerably, and does not hold its head so erect; the expression of the eye, too, is decidedly fierce, and lacks the good-natured twinkle of the South Australian species.

"The specimen in the Adelaide Botanical Gardens was caught some twelve months since near the Gawler River, about thirty miles north of Adelaide. It is kept in an enclosure, where it is secured with a strong chain and collar to prevent its escape by burrowing; it is perfectly docile, and never attempts to bite like the Common Wombat. It is fed on bran and weeds, and drinks freely of water. The only sound it emits is a short, quick grunt when annoyed; it sleeps a good deal during the day, rolled up almost into a ball, with its flesh-coloured nose buried between its fore paws; and appears impatient of heat and rain, as in its wild state it is entirely a burrowing animal, living in large holes in the limestone districts, and only leaving its habitation towards dusk for the purpose of obtaining food. It is fond of lying on its back like a bear, will burrow three or four feet into the soft ground of its enclosure, and scratches alternately with its fore paws. When worried, it presents its hind quarters to the enemy, and, suddenly turning round, makes a charge at his legs, evidently for the purpose of throwing him down; otherwise it is perfectly harmless. He runs fast for a short distance in a sort of gallop, but soon tires, and is easily caught. Although in some parts of the colony, especially on Yorke's Peninsula and about Port Lincoln, the holes of these Wombats are very numerous, yet the animals are but rarely seen. Many of the oldest colonists have informed me that they never saw a Wombat alive. The blacks on the Murray describe two kinds of Wombats: one (evidently P. latifrons) they speak of as 'big yellow fellow,' the other as being smaller and dark; they also say that the impressions of their feet in the sand-tracks leading to their burrows bear a striking resemblance to those of the footprints of a young child. The flesh they describe as being like pork, and excellent eating. They are extremely difficult to obtain, on account of their great timidity. The usual plan is to make a screen of boughs in the vicinity of their haunts, behind which the natives conceal themselves. If not killed on the spot, they will scramble to their holes, whence it is utterly impossible to dislodge them."—Proc. of Zool.

Soc. 1861, pp. 268–271.

The following is Professor M'Coy's account of the animal examined by him in Melbourne:—

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"As the description given by Mr. Angas in the 'Proceedings of the Knew Society of this Wombat could only be 
of what he supposed to be the living P. latifrons, and as the first skin of this Wombat could only be 
identified with that species by an examination of the bones of the skull, which Mr. Angas had not seen, I 
identified with that species by an examination of the bones of Professor Owen; and when, a few weeks ago, 
felt much doubt as to the identity of his species and that of Professor Owen; and Wombat from South Australia of an 
the Acclimatization Society of Melbourne received two specimens of a Wombat from South Australia of an