This article was downloaded by: [Suzhou University]
On: 13 August 2015, At: 08:34
Publisher: Taylor & Francis
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London, SW1P 1WG



Annals and Magazine of Natural History: Series 1
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tnah07

XLVII.—Some further particulars of the Coco de Mer (Lodoicea sechellarum)

George Clarke Esq.

Published online: 04 Dec 2009.

To cite this article: George Clarke Esq. (1841) XLVII.—Some further particulars of the Coco de Mer (Lodoicea sechellarum), Annals and Magazine of Natural History: Series 1, 6:39, 408-410, DOI: 10.1080/03745484109442641

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03745484109442641

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

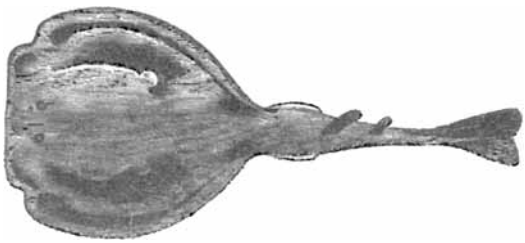
This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is

expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions

Downloaded by [Suzhou University] at 08:34 13 August 2015

skin entirely smooth: about half-way between the spiracles and the posterior terminations of the pectoral fin are situated two large ill-defined tubercles, one on each side of the body; two dorsal fins situated very far back on the tail; anterior dorsal entirely behind the ventrals; height of anterior dorsal 2 inches 5 lines, breadth at base 1 inch 2 lines; length of posterior dorsal 1 inch 3 lines, breadth at base 10 lines; pectoral fins scarcely lobed posteriorly. (*Colour.*) Uniform blackish brown above, greyish white beneath.

Differs from the *T. Narke*, *T. immaculata*, *T. unimaculata*, and *T. Bancroftii*, in being of a uniform brownish black above, not spotted as in those species; from the *T. Galvani* and *T. marmorata* (Riss.) it will be distinguished by the edges of the spiracles being smooth, and entirely wanting the tooth-like processes with which the spiracles of those species are provided; it is likewise much more slender than any of those species. The specific characters are of course peculiar. The specimen was taken in Dublin bay.



XLVII.—*Some further particulars of the* Coco de Mer (*Lodoicea sechellarum*). By George Clarke, Esq.*

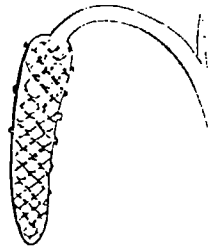
The germ sprouts indifferently, from either side of the cleft between the lobes, turning downwards in shooting, as represented in this section. It suffices for its vegetation that it be placed on the earth; it is not necessary that it be covered, but a shady situation is indispensable. It puts forth only one leaf a year, in general; but there are instances, it is said, in which two are produced; they are, however, exceedingly rare. The leaf at its first appearance is folded together in a most compact manner, so as to resemble a solid piece. This is moreover guarded by a thick downy



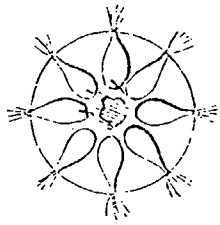
* To this gentleman we were indebted for the account given in p. 422 of the Annals. In the 54th volume of the Botanical Magazine, at tab. 2734, will be found a long and interesting account of this Palm, drawn up by Sir Wm. Hooker, from the communications of Mr. Harrison, who has been long resident at the Seychelles.

Downloaded by [Suzhou University] at 08:34 13 August 2015

felt, of a fawn colour, which only yields its hold when the leaf unfolds itself. The male flowers are of a most remarkable structure, and still more remarkable for their duration.

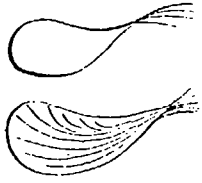


The spathe is from 20 to 30 inches long, and the surface reticulated with perfect regularity; the blossoms appear at the angles, and these, by a most wonderful contrivance, continue to bud forth for eight or ten years! Twenty blossoms are provided for each aperture. Here is a section (by fracture) which may convey some idea of this singular structure. The colour of the spathe is deep brown, that of the stamina bright yellow.



These compartments have somewhat the appearance of diminutive fir-cones at first sight; but if taken out and examined separately, they appear very different.

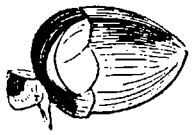
In their perpendicular position they appear thus; and a section of them in the same direction shows a sheath for each flower, which pushes off its predecessor, as it verges to maturity. Only one catkin is put forth annually, and eight or ten are often observable on the same tree, and all flowering.



There is only one female tree on the island of Mahé that bears; and that has only one drupe, which has been on it eight years, and does not yet give any indications of falling, though it appears just ripe. It was produced by suspending a male spadix on the leaves of the female tree, which stands alone; and it was some months before the effects of the impregnation were observable. To what age the plant might attain, if untouched, it is impossible to say; but there are many that the leaf-marks prove to be nearly 400 years old, and they exhibit no signs of decay. It appears that they thrive best, or rather grow most quickly, in a rich moist soil; but they are found in the driest spots, in the decayed granite and in quartzose sand. They begin to bear at from twenty-five to thirty years old. The outside of the stem is extremely hard and durable; the inside is very soft and spongy. The female blossoms resemble very much those of the common cocoa-nut, and appear to be susceptible of impregnation

Downloaded by [Suzhou University] at 08:34 13 August 2015

when about the size of an egg. It not unfrequently happens that they are but imperfectly impregnated; in which case they assume a different form from those in which the process is complete, and fall in two or three years.



The perfect fruit.



The abortion.

The weight of an ordinary ripe drupe is from 40 to 50 lbs. I believe it invariably happens, that when four lobes are contained in one husk, which is not uncommon, that they separate in the middle, forming two fruit, only distinguishable from those that grow separately by the flatness of the inner sides. Those, however, that have three lobes are always united.

The number of lobes of the leaves is altogether uncertain, varying from twenty-two to forty-five; nor do the two sides always contain an equal number.

I have only to add to the foregoing remarks, that the pollen, examined by the microscope, resembles in form a grain of barley, with a longitudinal furrow. It is too minute to present any form to the naked eye.—*Extract from a Letter from Mr. George Clarke of Mahé, which is the largest of the Seychelles group.*

XLVIII.—*Commentary on* Mr. G. R. Gray's '*Genera of Birds.*' 8*vo. London*, 1840. By H. E. Strickland, Esq., M.A., F.G.S., &c.

Mr. Gray's 'Genera of Birds,' though a work of no external pretensions, is calculated to exercise a very beneficial influence on the science of ornithology. To the unscientific reader it presents only a bare catalogue of names; but the naturalist no sooner consults it, than he finds in it evidence of much laborious research and sound criticism. The object of this work is to give a classification of all the generic groups of the Class Aves, which have been defined by various authors, and to append to each genus a list of the duplicate names which these authors have given to the same group, either through ignorance of each other's labours, or from the less excusable cause of wishing to introduce their own terms into the science to the exclusion of those given by the original descri-

Downloaded by [Suzhou University] at 08:34 13 August 2015