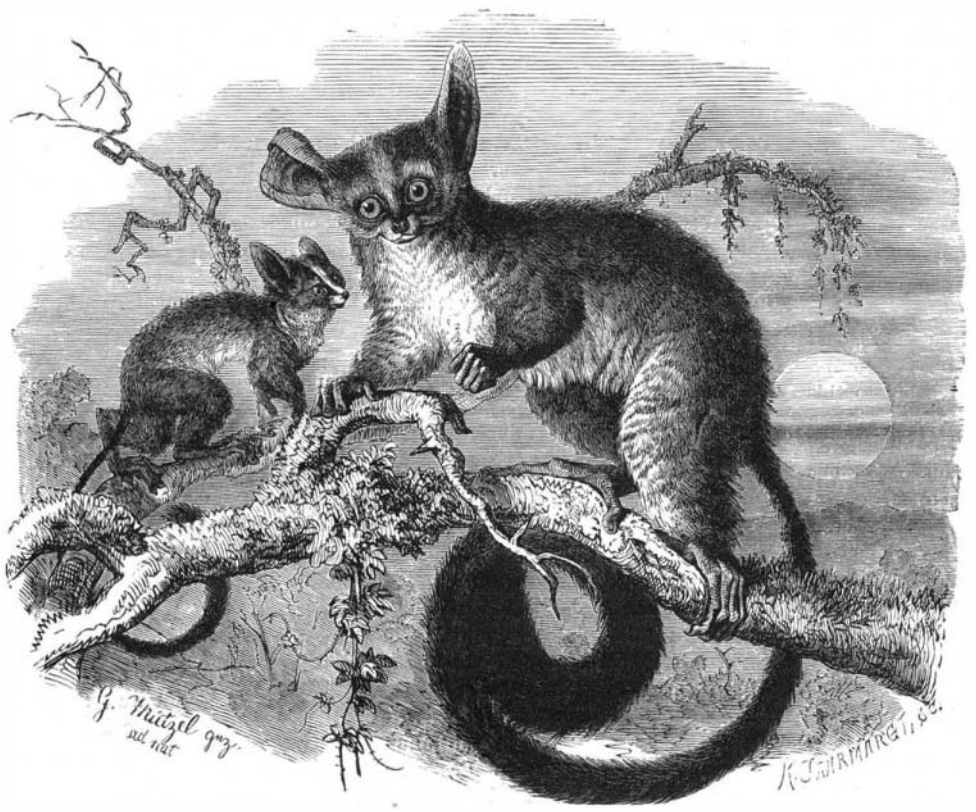
THE MOHOLI GALAGO.

The moholi galago is nearly sixteen inches in length, inclusive of the tail. Its color is gray, with irregular markings of a deeper hue. The under parts of the body are nearly white, and the limbs are slightly tinged with a golden luster. The tail is not very bushy, excepting at the extremity, and its color is a chestnut brown. The texture of the fur is very soft, and there is a slight wooliness in its setting.

Nocturnal in habits, it sleeps during the day, with its large ears folded over the head in such a manner as to give it the aspect of an earless animal. More active than the loris, the moholi does not secure its prey by stealing on it with slow and silent movements, but leaps upon the flying insects on which it loves to feed, and seizes them in its slender paws. Besides insects, various fruits form part of the moholi's food, more especially such as are of a pulpy nature, and it is said that the moholi eats that vegetable exudation which is known by the name of gum senegal. Its diurnal repose is taken in the curious nest which it builds in the forked branches of trees, using grass, leaves, and other soft substances for the purpose. In this lofty cradle the young are nurtured until they are of an age to provide for themselves.

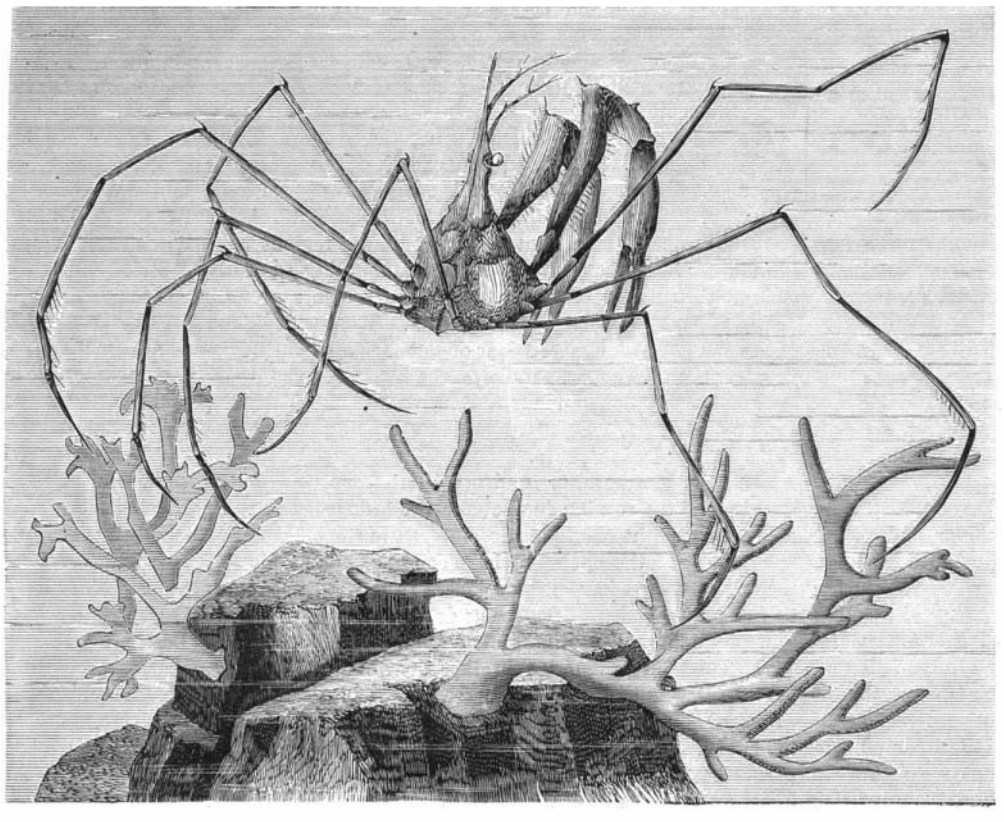
The face is full of expression, in which it is aided by the large and prominent ears; and the creature is said to contract its countenance into strange grimaces, after the fashion of the ordinary monkeys. Like the monkeys, too, it can leap for some little distance, and springs from one branch to another, or from tree to tree, with agility and precision. The moholi galago is an inhabitant of Southern Africa, having been found by Dr. Smith hopping about the branches of the trees that bordered the Limpopo river, in twenty-five degrees of south latitude.



MOHOLI.—*Galago Moholi*

SPIDER CRAB.

The body of this singular little crustacean is almost triangular, with a pointed protruding head. Notwithstanding its long slender legs it moves very slowly, never swimming, but crawling without touching its body to the ground. All kinds of sea tangle, plants, and sponges plant themselves on the backs of these crabs, sometimes completely enveloping them. These growths are so constant and so rapid that the creature can only free itself at the time when it changes its skin. This portable garden furnishes the crab with food which it gathers with its shear-like claws.



SPIDER CRAB.—*Stenorhynchus Longirostris.*

Hybrid Geese.

Mr. Charles Darwin communicates to the current number of *Nature* an interesting case, in which hybrid geese, the offspring of two distinct species, have proved quite fertile *inter se*. The common goose and the Chinese goose are so distinct that they have been placed in different genera or sub-genera; and yet they interbreed, and their offspring prove fertile. Mutual sterility is, therefore, shown to be no safe or immutable criterion of specific difference.

We have, however, says Mr. Darwin, much better evidence on this head, in the fact of two individuals of the same form of heterostyled plants (those in which the style varies in length in different flowers) which belong to the same species, yielding, when crossed, fewer seeds than the normal number, and the plants raised from such seeds being, in the case of *Lythrum salicaria*, as sterile as the most sterile hybrids.

Buried Oak Timber.

In deepening a river in the neighborhood of Norrköping, says the *Timber Trades Journal*, in order to make it accessible for ships of heavier draught, among several objects of interest brought up from the bottom, eight oak trees were found at a depth of seven feet under the old bottom. The bark was almost decayed, and when it was taken off the wood was found to be hard and black, resembling ebony. The trees are supposed to have been lying in the earth 900 years. The trees have been sold to a firm of joiners, who intend using them for cabinet work.

NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

Insects Destroyed by Fungi.—Dr. Hagen, of Harvard University, in a paper on the destruction of obnoxious insects, after describing some experiments which had been made by Mr. J. H. Burns and others, draws the following conclusions: 1. That the common house fly is often killed by a fungus (*Sporendoneme*), and that in epizootics a large number of insects are killed by the same vegetable parasite. 2. That the fungus of the house fly works as well as yeast for baking and brewing purposes. 3. That the application of yeast on insects produces in them a fungus which becomes fatal to insects. 4. That in the experiment made by Mr. Burns, all potato beetles sprinkled with diluted yeast died from the eighth to the twelfth day, and that the fungus was found in the vessels of the wings. He admits that further experiments are necessary to find out the most convenient method of application.

The Floating Fern.—One of the most widely disseminated tropical ferns is *Ceratopteris thalictroides*—a plant easily cultivated and propagated. Mr. Curtiss, in the *Botanical Gazette*, records the fact that he has collected fertile specimens of it in Florida. It appears to exist under widely different conditions, and it is very variable in size, and in the cutting of the fronds. Several of the forms have been described as species, and they are also cultivated under the generic name of *Parkeria*. Regarding the forms as belonging to one species, varying according to its habitat, it is generally dispersed in tropical and sub-tropical Asia, Africa, America, and Australia. Sometimes it grows in the muddy banks of rivers, in marshes, and other wet places, rooting in the ground. It is often found floating, however, like *Pistia* and *Azolla*. Mr. Curtiss found it floating free in water ten feet deep. Like some species of *Asplenium*, it propagates very freely from the buds which are abundantly produced on the fronds. Sometimes, as Wilson observed in Jamaica generally, the floating wild plants are much smaller than the cultivated ones, ranging less than six inches in height, including the fertile as well as the rosette of broad sterile fronds.

"Voice" in Fishes.—In a recent number of *Nature*, Mr. S. E. Pool gives an interesting account of an observation made by him in support of the claim that fishes are endowed with the faculty of voice. He stated that while engaged in a survey of the Disang River, in Eastern Asia, some six years ago, he had occasion to sound the depth of a pool. When seated in a small canoe and slowly nearing it, he suddenly became aware of the presence of a number of fishes called "mahsir." They were evidently attracted by the canoe, and Mr. Pool surmised that they might possibly think it a huge dead fish. While watching their movements he became aware of a peculiar "cluck" or percussive sound, which was frequently repeated on all sides, and coming from below, but near by. This was soon traced to the "mahsir," and one of them made distinct sounds which were answered by others. He states that in some parts of eastern Assam a large bivalve sings in concert with others.

The apparatus by means of which certain fishes are enabled to produce sounds has, according to the *Correspondance Scientifique*, been studied quite recently by a Danish naturalist, M. W. Sorensen. This gentleman, during his residence, in 1877 and 1878, at the point where the Riacho del Oro empties into the river Paraguay, discovered that the principal organ of sound was the swimming bladder. This, in the siluroids, is somewhat elastic throughout its whole length, while in the characins the elasticity depends especially on flat bands or round cords in its walls. The swimming bladder, as an organ, acquires its greatest development in the siluroids. In the species of the genera *Platystoma* and *Pseudaroides* it is divided by one longitudinal septum, and several transverse ones, into a few chambers or cells which communicate freely with each other. In the genus *Doras*, the swimming bladder has numerous appendages which are divided internally by incomplete septa, into a large number of small cells. In all these fishes the transverse apophyses of the first two or three vertebræ, and often a portion of the arch of the first vertebra, are not only joined together, but also with the posterior part of the cranium and the apophyses of the first vertebræ, by very strong elastic membranes. The transverse apophyses of the second and third vertebræ are in the form of very powerful springs, and are closely connected with the swimming bladder. The sound is produced by the action of muscles, which are inserted either directly on the swimming bladder or on the transverse apophysis of the third vertebra. In the characins, the elastic parts of the swimming bladder are stretched longitudinally by the contraction of the muscles, and the vibration which results from this rhythmical movement is transmitted to the air contained in the cavity of the bladder. In the siluroids, the anterior part of the bladder is drawn alternately backward and forward by the contraction and relaxation of the muscles; and during these movements the air, in passing through the incomplete transverse septa, sets the latter in vibration, and thus a sound is produced. The loudness of the sound emitted is in direct proportion to the velocity with which the springs vibrate. The fishes studied by M. Sorensen in connection with this subject belonged to the genera *Ageniosus, Doras, Platystoma, Prochilodus, Chalcinus,* and a few others.

An Open Winter and Spring Flowers.—At a meeting of the Torrey Botanical Club, on January 13, one of the members reported that he had found the liver leaf (*Hepatica triloba*) and the field chickweed (*Cerastium arvense*) in flower on the 11th of January of the present year, at Riverdale on the Hudson; and it was also stated by another member that the flower buds of the trailing arbutus gave evidence that