

**BY PATHS OF BIBLE KNOWLEDGE.
XI. SCRIPTURE NATURAL
HISTORY. II. THE ANIMALS
MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE**

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By Paths of Bible Knowledge. XI. Scripture Natural History. II. The Animals Mentioned in the Bible by Henry Chichester Hart

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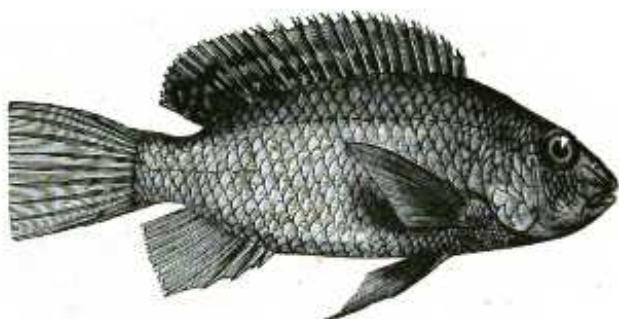
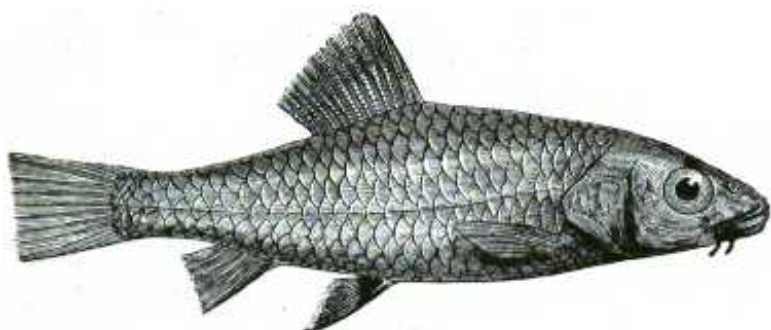
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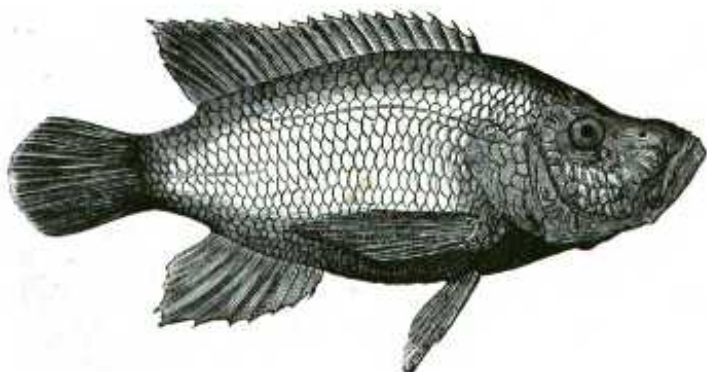
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HENRY CHICHESTER HART

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ST. PETER'S FISH.

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XI.

SCRIPTURE NATURAL HISTORY.

II.

THE ANIMALS MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE.

BY

HENRY CHICHESTER HART, B.A. (T.C.D.), F.L.S.

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XI

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P R E F A C E.

IN the following work the writer has availed himself of whatever knowledge he could obtain from previous authors. In addition to these sources, he has had the advantage of a lengthened tour in pursuit of Natural History in the Holy Land and its confines. The familiarity with most branches of the subjects here dealt with which arises from such exploration is most advantageous, if not necessary for the work.

Owing to the researches carried on by the Palestine Exploration Fund, considerable accuracy has been arrived at in our estimate of Palestine Natural History. By its assistance, Canon Tristram worked out his valuable series of investigations, which have supplied us with a fund of information. And it was under the auspices of this Society that the expedition of which I formed a part brought a successful journey to a close, an account of which will be found in its publications by the leader of the party, Dr. Hull, F.R.S.¹

Other works have been consulted—*Bible Animals*, by the Rev. J. G. Wood; *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*; articles in the *Transactions of the Biblical Archaeological*

¹ See *Mount Scir, Sinai, and Western Palestine*, by Edward Hull. A portion of the results of this expedition connected with the Natural History are still unpublished. See also, *On the Botany of Sinai and South Palestine*, Trans. Royal Irish Acad. 1835, by the present author.

Society, by the Rev. Wm. Houghton; *The Natural History of the Bible* by Thaddeus Mason, may be especially mentioned. These relate especially to the subject in hand, and the last mentioned volume will be found of much value as a survey of previous knowledge, although written before much accurate information had been gathered on the spot by competent observers.

With regard to the present work, it will be felt by all that any fresh light, however slight, which can be thrown by modern scientific study upon obscurities in Holy Writ is of the first importance; and as the obscurities, so far as they come within the scope of the present volume, arise from our own ignorance, it behoves all labourers in this sacred field of investigation to toil with undiminished assiduity until these obscurities be removed. In many cases, error arises from seeking for too much accuracy. Generic names, or terms used to convey a general idea—say of a hawk, a gull, or a lizard—should not be limited in too specific a manner. This applies especially to those passages where the sense is metaphoric. Where a special animal is undoubtedly intended, as in the case of its being forbidden for food, we desire an accurate interpretation; and when we consider how little was known of the natural products of Palestine at the time the Bible was rendered to us from the Hebrew, it is not marvellous that some of the interpretations do not bear the test of recent research. On the other hand, every fresh observation lends a new force or adds an additional beauty to one

or more passages ; and at the same time that it explains a difficulty of the text, it increases in us a reverence and a faith for the inspired character of the Sacred Volume.

The writer's method has been to take in alphabetical order every animal mentioned in the Bible, and to deal with each so as to draw especial attention to the characteristics alluded to in the various references. Where the translation seems to be doubtful, either from the nature of the context, or from the fact that the same word has elsewhere received a different rendering in the Scriptures, or because the animal quoted does not now and probably did not inhabit Palestine--in these cases what appeared to be the most probable of the various suggestions offered by different commentators has been given, leaving the reader to judge for himself in accordance with the weight of evidence. It will at once be seen that in several instances the suggested emendations are unmistakably correct, while in others they are of so purely hypothetical a nature as to be hardly worthy of consideration. And where a general term is used, it is wise to pause well before endeavouring to twist it into a particular signification in order to meet our present knowledge of Natural History in the Holy Land.

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