

### Note on the generic name of the horseshoe crab.

Mr. Pocock in his article "The Taxonomy of Recent Species of *Limulus*" (Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. 7th ser., IX, p. 257, 1902), considers that the validity of the generic name *Xiphosura* rests solely on the Gronovian foundation. On the contrary, before 1785, the date of Müller's *Limulus*, *Xiphosura* was adopted by at least three binomial writers, viz: by Brunnich (Zoologie Fundamenta, p. 208, 1772), Scopoli (Introductio Hist. Nat., p. 405, 1777) and Meuschen (Mus. Gronov., p. 83, 1778).—*Mary J. Rathbun.*

### A further note on the name of the Argentine Viscacha.

As has been fully shown,\* there is no doubt of the pertinence of the generic name *Viscaccia* Schinz, 1825, to "la Vizcache," of Azara, the Argentine Viscacha. But it turns out that Oken (Lehrb. d. Naturg., Theil III, Abth. 2, p. 835, 1826) used the same term in 1816, in nearly the same sense. Oken included in his group or subgenus *Viscaccia* only two species: (1) *Lepus chilensis* and (2) *Mus laniger*. The first, notwithstanding the name *chilensis*, is based, as far as the description is concerned, wholly on "la Vizcache" of Azara, while in his diagnosis of the group *Viscaccia* he says "Zehen vorn 4, hinten 3," which would exclude his second species, the *Mus laniger* of Molina, and hence the Chinchilla of Peru. As Bennett in 1829, made the Chinchilla the type of his genus *Chinchilla*, the Argentine Viscacha also becomes by restriction the type and only species of Oken's *Viscaccia*, the authority for which name is thus Oken (1816) instead of Schinz (1825).

It also unfortunately happens that Oken's name *chilensis* has one year's priority over *maximus* of Desmarest† (*Dipus maximus* Desm. ex Blainville M. S.). Hence, apparently, the Argentine Viscacha must be called *Viscaccia chilensis* (Oken). From his account of the animal, he appears to have believed, as did Azara, that it was found in Peru, and also in Chili, as shown by his reference to the use made of its fur in those countries. He gives its distribution correctly, however, as follows: "In Paraguay ist es nur westlich des Flusses Uruguay, vom 30° B. gegen Süden, südlich von Buenos Ayres sehr gemein."

Oken was almost erratic and irregular in nomenclatorial matters, viewed from the standpoint of present day usages, as was Zimmermann in his "Specimen Zoologiæ Geographicæ" 1777. His use of the generic names *Lepus* and *Mus* for the species he placed under *Viscaccia* will not surprise systematists who are familiar with the character of Oken's "Lehrbuch," although the name *Lepus chilensis* is apparently Oken's own name. It appears to have heretofore escaped citation.—*J. A. Allen.*

\*Cf. Palmer, Science, N. S., VI, p. 21, July 2, 1897; Thomas, Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., XIV, p. 25, April 2, 1901; Allen, *ibid.*, p. 181, Dec. 2, 1901.

†Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., XIII, p. 117, 1817.