

ZOOLOGY—*continued.*

ART. LI.—*On a New Species of Ophiuroidea.*

By H. FARQUHAR.

Communicated by the Secretary.

[*Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 20th March, 1900.*]

**Ophiocreas constrictus**, n. sp.

Disc thick, strongly constricted in the interbrachial spaces, concave in the middle, with large, long, prominent radial shields, almost meeting their whole length, and not quite reaching the centre. Diameter of the disc, 22 mm.; length of arm, 470 mm.; height of arm near the disc, 6.5 mm.; width, 7 mm. Disc and arms covered with loose, thick, wrinkled skin, especially wrinkled at the centre of the disc. Skin smooth to the eye, but under the microscope seen to be covered with exceedingly minute papillæ and numerous scattered pores or small pits on the disc and the arms near the disc. The long arms taper gradually to very fine extremities; they are rounded above and flat below. Ribs indistinct. The first two arm-pores have no scales; those beyond have two (rarely three) spiniform, bluntly pointed scales, encased in skin, with rough tips; towards the base of the arms they are rather stout and about equal in size, beyond the inner one is somewhat larger than the outer. The lowermost tooth is stout and bluntly pointed, those above somewhat larger and flattened.

Colour in alcohol reddish-brown above, yellowish below.

This species may be readily distinguished from the other known forms by its very long arms and the small pits in the skin on the disc and arms.

The type specimen which was collected by Mr. W. Docherty at Dusky Sound, and placed in my hands by Dr. Benham for identification, is in the Otago Museum. A dry specimen with its arms coiled around a gorgonian, found by the late Mr. T. Kifk at Jackson Bay, is in the Colonial Museum, Wellington. This is the only species of the family *Astrophytidae* which has been found in New Zealand waters.

The home of the genus *Ophiocreas* is the "continental slope," all the other known species having been found between 118 and 580 fathoms except *O. abyssicola*, which came from 2,300 fathoms. Our species probably occurs plentifully in the deep water of the fiords on the southwestern coast of the South Island.

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ART. LIII.—*A Hunting Spider.*

By TAYLOR WHITE.

[*Read before the Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute.*]

THE very large family of predaceous insects known under the title "Arachnida" includes, besides the true spiders, the mites and scorpions. This classification would, to the uninitiated, seem a gathering together of forms which differ very widely one from the other; and so they really do, but at the same time these creatures give evidence of descent from an ancestral Arachnid which was the origin of all these remarkable creatures.

From my own observation certain true spiders are, as it were, a partial copy of the scorpion; they spin no web to entangle their prey, but are provided by nature with a strong pair of arms, terminated by formidable pincers, by which they seize their victim. This pair of scorpion-like arms would seem in a measure to resemble those of the crab, the lobster, and the prawn. They are, in reality, destructive implements, which take the place of the forward pair of legs, and are never used to assist locomotion, but are carried elevated and pointing forward on either side of the creature's head, like a pair of nippers open, and ready for action. The remaining three pairs of legs are solely used in giving movement and stability to the body. The body consists of two main parts—the shorter fore part, to which the pair of claws and the six legs are attached; and the longer after part, or abdomen, which is carried clear of the ground. This dreadful-looking creature, if magnified two hundred times, would be a startling object to meet with in a summer day's ramble, and might lead to undesirable complications. The following account describes their method of catching prey.

Looking at a remarkable spider walking on the window-pane, I became aware that, although seemingly stationary, it in reality was stealthily on the move. This motion would