

Schomburgk, which was spontaneous and unsolicited, not being aware of what had been done, and believing that the Water Lily was a new genus, also communicated with Sir H. Wheatley, and obtained Her Majesty's permission that Mr. Schomburgk might call it *Victoria regina*, and under this name his description of the plant was first published in the Athenæum, the Morning Herald and the Morning Post of the 9th of September 1837. Dr. Lindley's privately printed edition of Mr. Schomburgk's description and plate was presented to the Geographical Society with a letter dated the 3rd of November 1837.

Had the Botanical Society known that the Geographical Society considered the communication as their property, and had deputed Dr. Lindley to publish it, and that Her Majesty had already given Mr. Schomburgk permission to affix the name of *Victoria regia* to the flower, they would certainly have used that name, and, indeed, I believe, that under those circumstances they would not have published it at all; but such having proved to be the case, I should be inclined, now that I am for the first time aware of these circumstances, to forgo the priority of publication and in future use the name of *Victoria regia* for the plant.—J. E. GRAY, 26 Nov. 1850.

JOURNEY TO EXPLORE THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE AMAZON RIVER.

*To the Editors of the Annals of Natural History.*

GENTLEMEN,

24 Bloomsbury Street, London,  
Nov. 20, 1850.

In the February Number of your valuable Magazine, you kindly inserted a few lines extracted from a letter that I had received from my friend Mr. Wallace, who is investigating the natural history of the Amazon River; I therefore make bold to send you a few more, taken from letters received since.

I remain, Gentlemen, yours very truly,

SAMUEL STEVENS.

Santarem, Nov. 15, 1849 (500 miles above Parà).

"I spent about three weeks at Montealegre and have now been back here nearly a month, so before I leave for the Rio Negro I send you a small lot of insects; they consist almost entirely of Lepidoptera, the *Beetles* not yet having made their appearance; in the wet season I hear there are plenty both at Montealegre and here, so I shall probably return here, unless I meet with something much better to keep me up above. Of the boxes sent, Nos. 1 and 2 only are for you to dispose of. Your lot, though a small one, I trust will be found a good one; there are a very considerable number of fresh species, one of which (No. 605\*) is, I think, the *most beautiful thing* I have yet taken; it is very difficult to capture, settling almost invariably high up

\* This beautiful species I find to be the rare *Callithea Sapphira*, Hub., of which hitherto only one example appears to have existed in the collections in this country.

in trees ; two specimens I climbed up after and waited for ; I then adopted a long pole which I left at a tree they frequented, and by means of persevering with it every day for near a month have got a good series : the sexes I have no doubt whatever about, though I have not taken them *in copula* ; the female flies lower and is easier to take than the male. The allied species (606\*) was rather abundant at Montealegre ; the orange Heliconia-like insect occurred there plentifully. Of all *new species* and others which I know to be good, I have sent plenty ; of old things I have sent a few only.

“ In the *Erycinidæ* there are a great many species fresh to me, and I hope *some new* to Europe : I have now made descriptions of all the species sent, so that should I be obliged again to send home my duplicates or lose any of them, I can still recognize the species. The handsome species I hope will sell well. In box No. 3. I have put a lot of miscellaneous insects, which please take out and dispose of. There is also a small stuffed alligator, a species I think they have not in the Museum ; it is the *Jacare tinga*, of which the tail is *eaten* and is very good ; they are an immense deal of trouble in skinning. I have sent also a larger one, which I think is the common species ; also a tortoise-shell and a few vertebræ of the large alligator of the Amazon I have put in to fill up ; perhaps they may be interesting to geologists to compare with those of fossil Sauria. Shells there are none here. There are two painted calabashes in paper with your name outside ; please accept them as a specimen of the Indian girls' work at Montealegre ; the varnish, colours, &c., are all made by themselves from the leaves and bark of different trees and herbs ; they paint them with bits of stick and feathers, and the patterns are all their own design ; they are the usual drinking-vessels here, but less ornamented for common use. I am much in want of some work on the species of butterflies ; I think the ‘*Encyclopédie Méthodique*,’ vol. ix. by Godart, is the only thing that will do. The leaf in the box is a segment of the *Victoria regia* ; if any one wants it, you may sell it.”

“ Barra de Rio Negro (1000 miles above Parà), March 20, 1850.

“ After sending off the box from Santarem (which I trust you have received safe), I was delayed a fortnight waiting for men to go up the river. After great difficulty I obtained them, but to Obidos only, a distance of about eighty miles (three days) ; there I was delayed four days, and then got others another stage of four days on to Villa Nova. There I was delayed a week, and was there indebted to the kindness of a trader, who lent me some of his men to get on to Barra. Now however the rains and head winds had set in, so that after rather an unpleasant journey owing to wet and mosquitoes, we arrived at Barra on the 30th of Dec. in thirty-four days from Santarem. I was so anxious to reach here before the wet season had regularly set in, that I never wasted an hour to go on shore but once a day to cook, so that I literally collected nothing on the road except at Villa Nova, where we had tolerably fine weather. After the muddy, monotonous, mosquito-swarmed Amazon, it was with great pleasure we found

\* This is *Callithea Leprieurii*, Feisthamel, also very rare.—S. S.

ourselves in the black waters—*black as ink* they are, and well deserve their name; the shores are rugged and picturesque—and greatest luxury of all, mosquitoes are unknown except in the islands. Our voyage, however, was not near so bad as it might have been, for Mr. Spruce, who left Santarem for Obidos exactly a week before us, arrived there only the evening before, having taken *nine* days owing to the want of wind, without which it is impossible to stem the current. We are here staying with Sir Henrique Anthony, in the same house Edwards occupied; he is a most hospitable fellow, and his house is the general receptacle of strangers. I soon found that insects were exceedingly scarce here at this season, it being almost impossible to get half a dozen in a day worth bringing home. Birds too are equally scarce, so I resolved on a short trip up the Rio Negro to where the *Umbrella chatterers* are found. I spent a month there, and being fortunate in finding a good hunter, have got a small but pretty good collection of birds, considering the season.

“With regard to living animals, &c., it is quite impossible to send them from here. At Parà they can only be bought at such high prices as not to make it worth the risk. The captains too require half the price for the passage. I had intended, if I could have been now on my voyage up the Rio Negro, to have returned about next Christmas, getting all the live animals I could on the way and coming home myself with them, calculating that I could get sufficient to pay all expenses to England and back; but I do not think now I shall do so, as I shall probably not be able to start for the frontiers till June or July, and it is nearly a two months’ voyage. If therefore sufficient funds arrive by that time, I shall probably stay up in the neighbourhood of the Cassiquiare a year, and then on returning to Barra see about a journey up towards the Andes. I am anxiously waiting also to know about the fish and reptiles, as I do not want to get more if they do not pay.

“Besides the umbrella birds, the little bristle-tailed manakin will, I think, be good; also the trumpeter, which is a species different from that at Parà; the muscovy ducks also. Both among the birds and insects there are, I know, many common as well as rare species. There are also two bad specimens of the celebrated “bell bird,” which I believe is rare; they frequent the highest trees out of ordinary gunshot; my hunter fired five or six times at each of them, and after several ineffectual shots at another gave it up in despair. Of the curl-crested araçari, I have only at present got a single specimen. The araçaris I send are two species new to me, and are both much prettier than the curl-crested. I must now not forget to thank you for the prints you sent me, which I only discovered a short time ago, never having opened the box containing them. Any newspapers or scientific periodicals you can send me will be particularly acceptable.”

*On the Occurrence of Regalecus glesne at Redcar, Yorkshire, in 1850.*  
By J. E. GRAY, Esq., F.R.S.

A specimen of this fish was cast ashore on Redcar Sands, Yorkshire, on Thursday, the 3rd of January 1850. “The fish was alive