

C.S.

SCIENTIFIC.
MISCELLANEOUS.

NAT/SEA/3 # 14

1931.

No.

3/31

Mr. A.E. Felton.

SUBJECT.

1930.

30th November.

Previous Paper.

SEA LEOPARDS.

DANGER IN REGARD TO AT WEST POINT ISLAND.

MINUTES.

1-2 Letter from Mr. A.E. Felton. 30/11/30.

G. S.
Schubel. I will refer
to W. Hamilton for any comment
that he may have to make in
the first place

W. S.

14 C.S.
It is strongly desirable to
destroy these crabs near human
habitations. To Mr. Hamilton.

5/21.

M

Subsequent Paper.

Mr. J. E. Hamilton

For your comment

please

Ymally

5-1-31.

Letter from Mr. J. E. Hamilton 7/3/31 (3)

Y/E.

Submitted.

C. J. J.
18/3/31

Off 11. 31.

I think that it

will suffice to ask with thanks

the receipt of this liberating letter.

2. Therefore please let 17:

Hamilton 1-11.

Ymally

10-3-31

Letter to Mr. A. E. Feltow, 11 March, 1931.

P.A.
12/3/31

(Y)



The Hon^{ble}

The Colonial Secretary

Stanley

Sir

I beg to call His Excellency's attention to the Sea Leopards, as they are a danger to human life.

At three different instances, they have made an attack on the men here twice when rowing in the open boat, and once on the ~~the~~ cutter, when getting underway - Halliday had a narrow escape when loosening the moorings. Duncan saw the brute and shouted just as it was making a spring, where it landed on the deck of the cutter, with jaws extended, just missing Halliday's leg.

I was not a witness of the incidence. But I quite believe it.

I have the honour to remain
Sir

Yours humble & Obediently

Arthur E. Yellou

P.S.

I have told the men never to leave the
beach without a loaded ^{gun}, and shoot any
full grown leopard at sight

AEY

Hon. Col. Sec.

In the South the leopard seal may often be seen jumping out of the water on to pieces of ice in order to rest.

So far as I know all seals which have not been molested, are very curious. The leopard seal certainly.

There is therefore nothing ^{improbable} ~~unusually~~ in a leopard jumping on to a boat, nor in its opening its mouth on seeing a strange object such as a man.

I have never heard any statement which leads me to believe that this seal would ^{unprovoked} attack man, although tales of its ferocity are common enough, perhaps because they can easily be made the foundation of exciting yarns.

It will, I believe, usually be found that, before it displayed any animosity, the animal ^{was provoked} in such statements has been beaten over the head or jabbed with a boat hook by some unnecessarily panic-stricken person.

That one animal will attack another is no proof that it will attack man.

The man Halliday is probably one of the least accurate observers and narrators in the islands, in fact his reputation in his connections may be regarded as established.

I do not regard either of these statements as evidence that the leopard seal is even a potential menace to man.

I have observed and marked many of these animals, their invariable tendency is to try to escape.

J. H. Harrington.

3/31.

11th March,

31

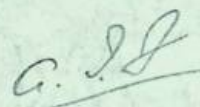
Sir,

I am directed by the Acting Governor to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your interesting letter of the 30th of November, 1930, on the subject of Sea Leopards.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,



for Colonial Secretary.

A. E. Felton, Esq., J.P.,
West Point Island,
West Falkland.

Notes on Sea Leopards

(1)

I saw the men beat off the leopard from the pulling boat, and I quite believe their account of the attack on the cutter.

Dr Bruce of the "Scotia" mentions the sea leopard as the only dangerous seal in the Antarctic; in another place it is mentioned as the only mammal that will naturally prey on humanity.

The following instance which I witnessed myself will give an idea of its ~~cour~~ cunning and ferocity - A few weeks ago, (Sept 26th) I saw a turmoil on the wateredge of the sand beach, and with the aid of the telescopes made out a group of seal struggling. It proved to be a large sea leopard, a full grown female sea lion, or what is generally known as a Bull of the same specie. The sea lion was struggling to get a footing on the beach, but was held back by a small sea leopard, which was fastened on to its

hindmost flippers; the big leopard
was endeavouring to get a grip at the
throat. Which it succeeding in doing, and
giving a quick turn threw the sealion over
into deeper water; and the pair set to
work to drown it. only once did it
manage to get its head above water, and
then its throat appeared to be torn out
and the Leopard's grip was at the back of
the neck. It took fully a quarter of an
hour before the struggle ceased. The
pair then started off from the sand beach dragging
their quarry to ^a patch of thick kelp; and although
it took over a quarter of an hour they never
came above the surface until reached the
kelp patch. Lifting their dinner to the top
and allowing it to sink on a mass of tangled
kelp; presumably to keep the joint clear of the
mud and sand when dining. The feast con-
tinued from ⁸ A.M until after 2 P.M. - The method
of feeding is similar to that of Turkey buzzards
when they kill a lamb. belly torn open and skin
turned inside out and attached to head and
tail

(217)