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Extract from

Charles Darwin and the Beagle Adventure

Written by

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March 1832 to June 1834

South America

Up and Down the Coast

Sailing southwards from Rio, the *Beagle* could now begin the task of completing the coastal survey begun on its previous voyage. As Darwin had no official role in the surveying, he was largely free to go exploring whenever the opportunity arose. Sometimes he chose to stay aboard, as he did when the *Beagle* visited the remote Falkland Islands and rescued the stranded crew of a French whaling ship. More often, however, he opted to go ashore on solo expeditions, some of which lasted for weeks on end. During the two years of surveying work, Darwin actually spent more time on dry land than on board ship. He often travelled in the company of gauchos, the fierce-looking South American cowboys. During their long rides across the vast plains of Patagonia, Darwin began to feel like a true explorer – each new day seemed to bring fresh discoveries and insights.



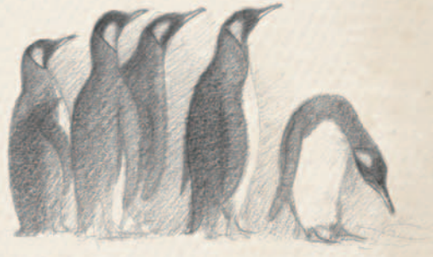
Darwin was not the only one aboard with an interest in wildlife. Captain FitzRoy made the first detailed drawing of a dusky dolphin. This marine mammal is sometimes referred to as FitzRoy's dolphin.



I have scarcely for an hour been quite free from sea-sickness. How long the bad weather may last I know not, but my spirits, temper and stomach, I am well-assured, will not hold out much longer.
9th January 1833

The tops of our masts and higher yard ends shone with the electric fluid playing about them - St Elmo's Fire. To complete these natural fireworks the sea was so highly luminous that the penguins might be tracked by the stream of light in their wake.
22nd July 1832





St Elmo's Fire was the name given to the glowing light that sometimes danced around a ship's masts and rigging during stormy weather. Darwin well understood that the phenomenon was caused by the electrical nature of thunderstorms, but superstitious sailors regarded St Elmo's Fire as a sign of good luck.



A storm strikes on an unlucky day for the Beagle*:*

At noon the storm was at its height and we began to suffer - a great sea struck us and came on board. The after-tackle of the quarter boat gave way and an axe being obtained, they were instantly obliged to cut away one of our beautiful whale boats...it is not easy to imagine what a state the decks were in from the great body of water.
13th January 1833

Before leaving England, Darwin had arranged to send batches of carefully packed and labelled specimens back to Henslow, who would then distribute them to appropriate experts. This was partly to save space on board the Beagle *and partly so that the work of scientific examination could begin as quickly as possible. Official communications and personal letters were often exchanged at sea, but Darwin did not trust his precious specimens to the hazards of transfer between ships. He preferred to wait until they reached Montevideo before consigning the first batch to Henslow in August 1832.*

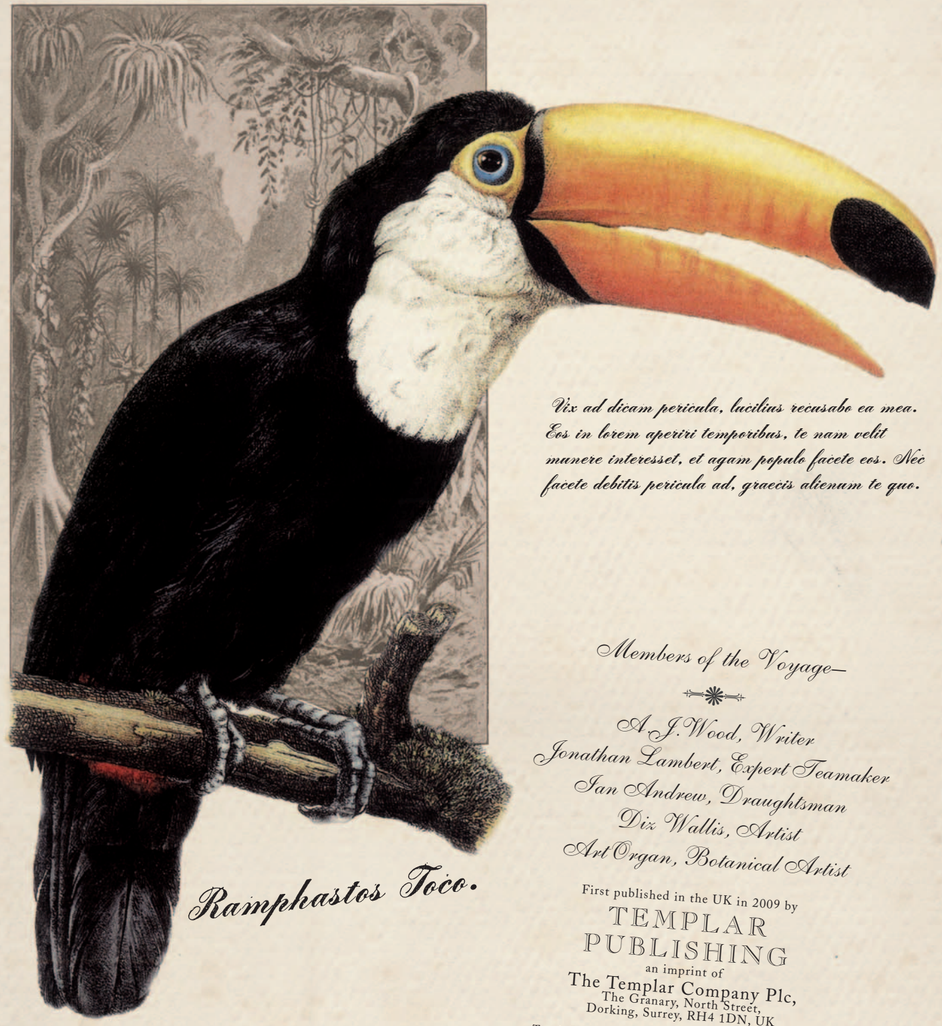
Surveying was slow, tedious work, and FitzRoy was anxious to complete it as quickly as possible. On his own initiative and at his own expense, he hired two local skippers and their boats in order to speed up the process. Unfortunately, the Navy did not agree with this decision and refused to reimburse him.

The further south they travelled, the worse the weather became. The seas around the tip of South America are notorious for being among the stormiest in the world, and Darwin spent most of his time at sea feeling ill and miserable. His mood was hardly improved when many of his precious specimens were irretrievably damaged by seawater during a particularly violent storm.

Before taking the *Beagle* into the Pacific Ocean, FitzRoy invited Darwin to accompany him on a boat expedition along the Santa Cruz River. They travelled upriver for 12 days, but were forced to turn back just a few dozen miles from the western foothills of the Andes mountains.



A wonderful shoal of porpoises at least many hundreds in number, crossed the bows of our vessel... they proceed by jumps... and as hundreds thus cut the water it presented a most extraordinary spectacle. *18th July 1832*



Vix ad dicam pericula, lucilius recusabo ea mea. Eos in lorem aperiri temporibus, te nam velit munere interesset, et agam populo facete eos. Nec facete debitis pericula ad, graecis alienum te quo.

Ramphastos Toco.

Lorem ipsum cum elit consulatu at, pro erant reprimique ei, te eos nihil nostrud. Alii alterum efficiendi id cum, eum ut sint mediocrem adolescens, in cibo interpretaris quo. Usu debitis dolores dissentiunt te, torquatos contentiones vim et, erant impetus sit no. No sit zzril constituto.

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Cabbage Palm

Darwin's Notebook

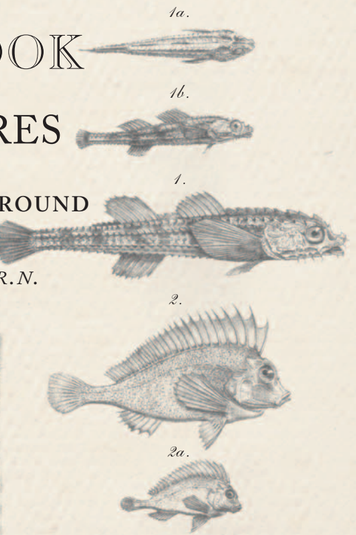
The Beagle Adventures

COUNTRIES VISITED DURING THE VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD OF H.M.S. 'BEAGLE'

UNDER THE COMMAND OF CAPTAIN FITZ ROY, R.N.



The Beagle moored to the West of the Galapagos Islands



Fish Pl: 7

1. Aspidophorus Chilcensis. Twice Nat: size.
1a, 1b " " Nat: size.
2. Agriopus hispidus. Twice Nat: size.
2a " " Nat: size.
2b " " Magnified scales.
[Not shown, as sketch too small]



Mammalia Pl: 23

Mus Darwinii



Birds Pl: 34

Tanagra Darwinii

EDITED BY A.J. WOOD

FROM AN ACCOUNT
BY CHARLES DARWIN, M.A., F.R.S.
AUTHOR *OF* 'ORIGIN OF SPECIES,' ETC.

ILLUSTRATED.

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