

THE SECOND SKELETON OF *DESMOSTYLUS* IN GIFU PREFECTURE

by

Desmostylus Research Committee*

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The mammal skeleton found and excavated by S. Tomatsu and M. Azuma in Inkyo-yama at Kuziri, Izumi-cho, Toki District, Gifu Prefecture in October, 1950 was confirmed to be *Desmostylus* by Takai and Shikama, who visited that locality in April, 1951. It was recognized by Ikukoshi, one of the party that visited there, that the skeleton was from the upper part of the Tsukiyoshi bed named by himself. In June, Sakurai and Iwasaki carried out the tightening of specimens on the spot, while Yabe, Takai, Ijiri, Shikama, and Ikukoshi negotiated several matters to be managed on the actual place. As a consequence, the specimen was scheduled to be carried to the branch school of Yokohama National University in the city of Yokohama, and restoration of the skeleton was to be done there.

The discovery of the skeleton is second in the world, the other being from Keton in Sakhalin and, in addition, the specimen more than offsets the defects of the Keton specimen. Parts of the skeleton found were the skull, part of the vertebra, rib, lumbar vertebra, tibia, part of the humerus, and parts of phalanges, and it is expected that the restoration of fragmentary specimens would require a considerably long time. Although

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the skeleton is of a young individual, it bears considerable resemblance to that from Keton. Among the bones, four pairs of flat ones were also found, which were almost assuredly the breast bones, judging from their position in the skeleton. The premolars are best preserved and we would be able to carry on an anatomical study on the inner part of the skull as well as an ontogenetic study.

To this study, the Asahi Subsidy for Development of Scientific Research is to be donated. The unearthened point mentioned above is scheduled for excavation next September or October, when the bone fragments remaining in the rock blocks already discovered in the last excavation will be simultaneously collected, giving careful consideration to their repair and arrangement. In addition, we cherish an intention to carry out a comparative study on both the Kuziri and Keton species.