

II. *Part of a Letter from Dr. Steigertahl, F. R. S. to Sir Hans Sloane, Bart. Pres. R. S. giving an Account of a Narhual or Unicorn Fish, lately taken in the River Ost, Dutchy of Bremen, dated at Hanover, ^{May 1.} _{April 20.} 1736. Translated from the French by T. S. M. D. &c.*

TOwards the End of *January* last, N. S. we had the Curiosity to catch a sort of Whale called the *Narhual* or *Sea-Unicorn*. It was taken in the River *Ost*; near the Village *Bellum*, where it falls into the *Elbe*, (in the Dutchy of *Bremen*, which belongs to our Monarch) four *German Miles* from the Sea. They took a great Quantity of Fat out of it, to make (Thrann or) Whale-Oil; but observed, that this Train-Oil was of a Stench almost intolerable, by reason that this *Narhual* feeds on Carcasses: For *Nar* signifies a Carcass or dead Body, according to *Valentini* in his *Museum Museorum*, Book III. Chap. 30.

There was such Care taken of the Skin, before the Dissection, that it was cured with Salt and Alum, and stuff'd so as to give the just Figure of the Fish: Having left with it the Bones of the Skull, and some Vertebrae near the Tail.

The Skin was spotted with dark brown Spots upon a white Ground. The Epidermis was transparent, and under it was another Skin very thin and spotted; but the true Skin was brown, and near an Inch in Thickness. On the Top of the Head they only found a semilunar Hole, as in the Porpoise, according to the
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Description given by *John Daniel Major*, and publish'd in the *Miscell. Academ. Nat. Curios. Dec. 1. An. 3. p. 22. & seqq.* This Hole opens into the two Canals which run through the Skull to the Palate, and are called by *Major*, *Ductus hydragogi*. They did not remark in the Skin any Opening or Outlet for the Excrements; and I have been told, that this *Narhual* voided them through this Hole on the Top of the Head.

Concerning the Horn, I agree in Opinion with *Wormius* and others, who take it for a Tooth; but I cannot believe that its sole Use is to break the Ice: It rather serves the Fish for seeking its Food. A Captain of a *Greenland* Vessel has assured me, that being upon the Coast a Whale-fishing, and having taken one, as he was turning the Whale to get at the Fat, he found on the opposite Side to him, a *Narhual*, that had stuck this Tooth into the Whale's Belly, up to its Mouth, and had suck'd the Blood and Humors.

I am sorry I have not an exact Account to send you of every Particular that was observ'd in the Dissection of this *Narhual*; for I have only seen the stuff'd Skin, and consequently the outward Shape, as it was carrying to *Leipfic* Fair, and on the way shewn here at *Hanover*. And as I find that the Figure engrav'd and printed at *Hamburg*, has a good Likeness to what I have seen, I have hereto annexed a Print of it.

EXPLANATION of the PRINT. TAB. I. Fig. I.

1. A Semilunar Hole, through which the Fish cast out Water and Blood, upon dying.
2. A small Rising on the Middle of the Back, and fleshy as the Fins.

3. The

3. The Mouth very little, without Teeth in the upper Jaw, except this *Dens prominens*, or Tusk; which has by some been taken for a Horn: And there was no lower Jaw found.
4. The Eye, very small.
5. The Fin on the right Side, which, as well as the opposite, is fleshy.
6. The Tail fleshy, like the Fins; which, taken according to its Width, is not vertical, but horizontal.
7. The prominent Tooth or Tusk, generally taken for a Horn.

The Length of this *Narhual* from N^o 3 to 6, was measured, and found to be 17 Feet 9 Inches.

The Tooth six Feet three Inches.

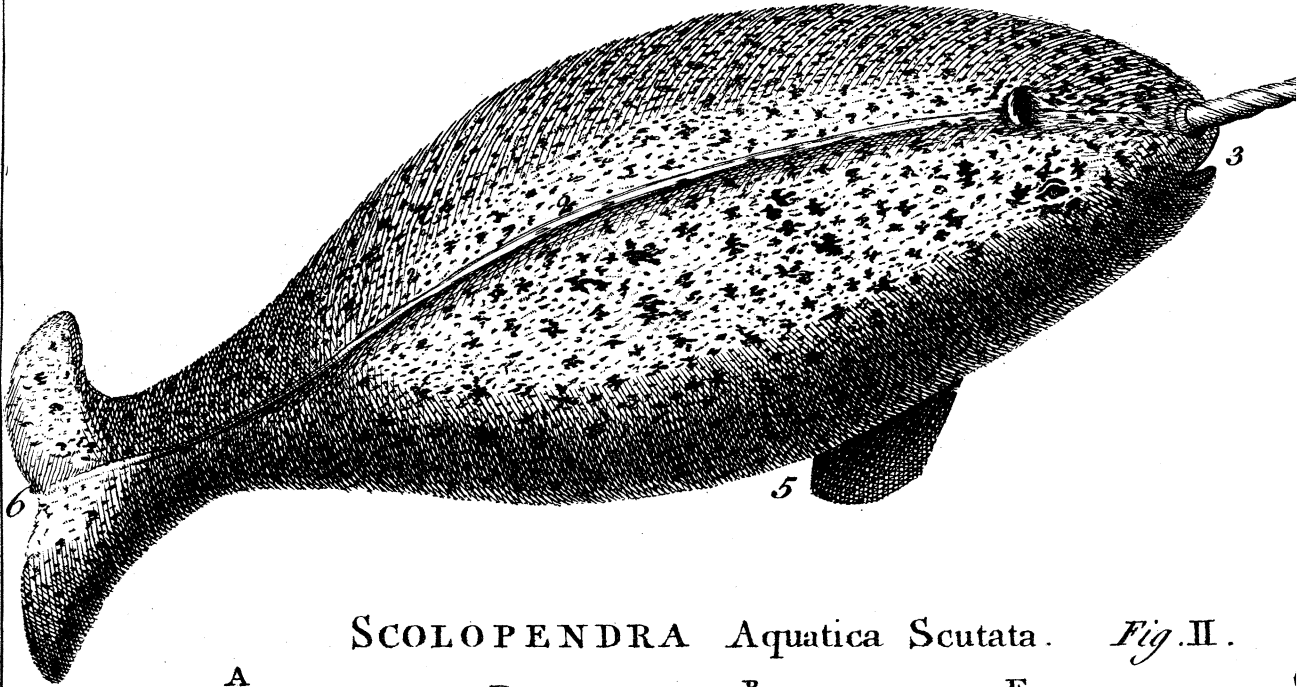
The greatest Thickness, measured round, was 14 Feet.

The Skin was smooth, without Scales, like that of an Eel; and was white mark'd with blackish Spots.

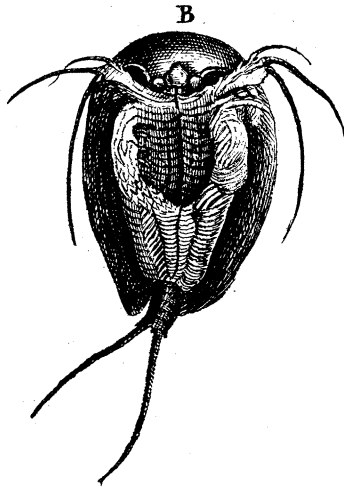
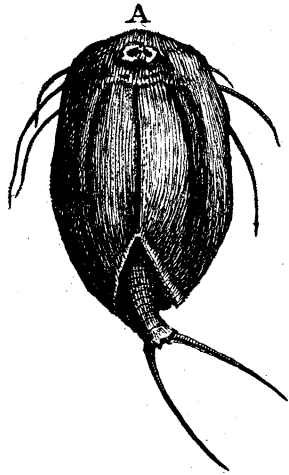
III. *A Description of the same Narhual, communicated by John Henry Hampe, M. D. F. R. S.*

IN a Creek called the *Beluhmer Wadt*; belonging to the Bailiwick of *Newhaus* in the Dutchy of *Bremen*, hath been caught alive, an unknown Fish of a large Size, 18 to 20 Feet in Length, and four in Diameter. He hath on the Fore-part of the Head, just above the Mouth, which is very small, a Horn six Feet long, white like Ivory, and curiously twisted. The Body is white, sprinkled with black Spots, and smooth like an Eel. The Head is in Proportion to the Body, very

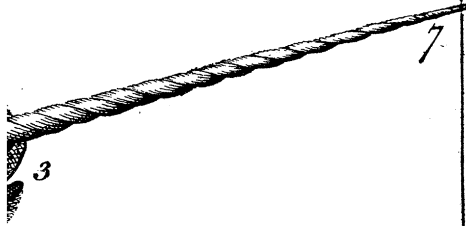
NARHUAL . *Fig. I.*



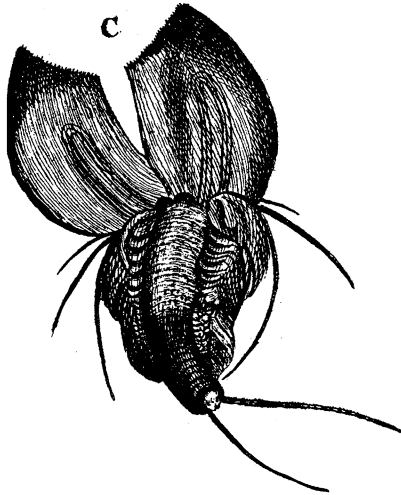
SCOLOPENDRA Aquatica Scutata . *Fig. II.*



Philosoph. Transact. N.º 447.

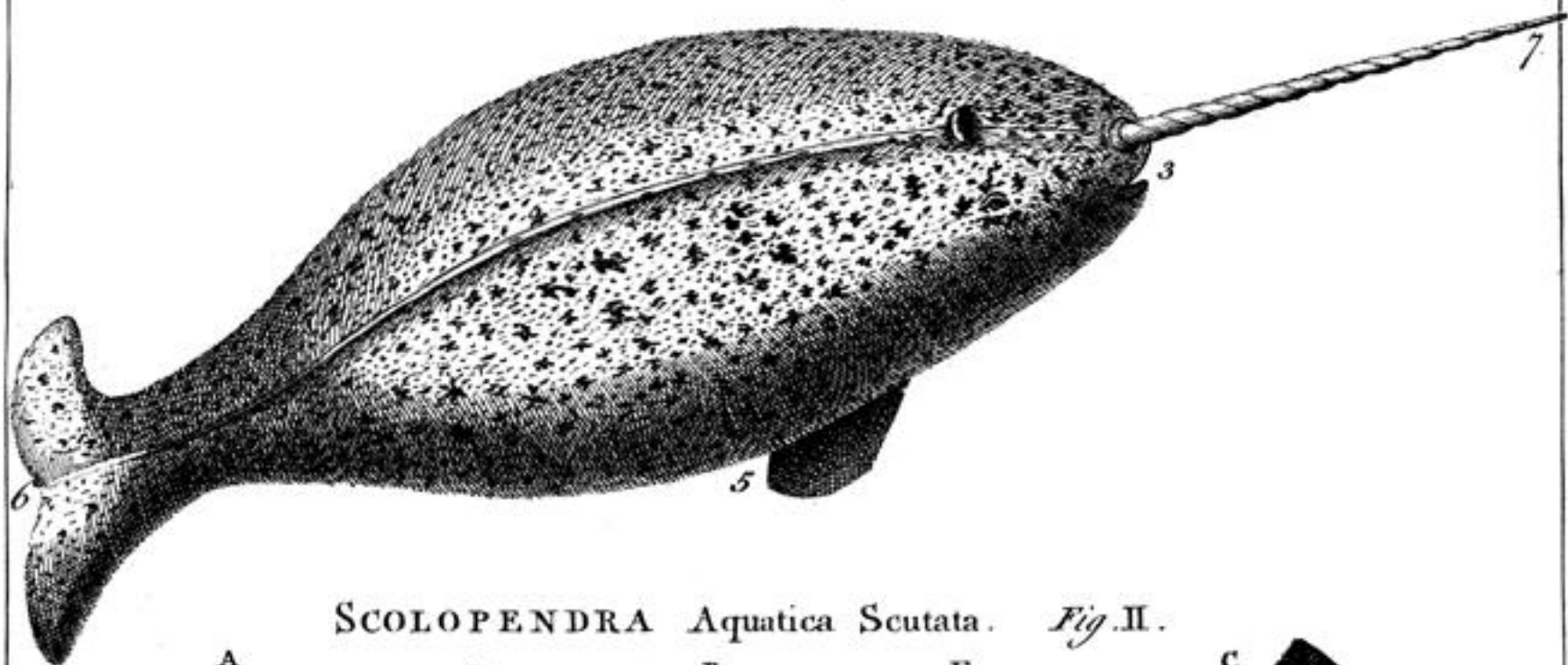


I.



J. Mynde Sc.

NARHUAL . *Fig. I.*



SCOLOPENDRA Aquatica Scutata. *Fig. II.*

