

Mammals was made as early as 1816 by the eminent anatomist Blainville, who has already been mentioned, and who first clearly recognised the three natural main groups or sub-classes of Mammals, and distinguished them according to the formation of their generative organs as *Ornithodelphia*, *Didelphia*, and *Monodelphia*. As this division is now justly considered by all scientific zoologists to be the best, on account of solid foundation on the history of development, let us here keep to it also.

The first sub-class consists of the *Cloacal Animals*, or *Breastless animals*, also called *Forked animals* (Monotrema, or Ornithodelphia). This class is now represented only by two species of living mammals, both of which are confined to Australia and the neighbouring island of Van Diemen's land, namely, the well-known Water Duck-bill (*Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*) with the beak of a bird, and the less known Beaked Mole (*Echidna hystrix*), resembling a hedgehog. Both of these curious animals, which are classed in the order of *Beaked Animals* (*Ornithostoma*), are evidently the last surviving remnants of an animal group formerly rich in forms, which alone represented the Mammalia in the secondary epoch, and out of which the second sub-class, the *Didelphia*, developed later, probably in the Jurassic period. Unfortunately, we as yet do not know with certainty of any fossil remains of this most ancient primary group of Mammals, which we will call *Primary Mammals* (*Pro-mammalia*). Yet they possibly comprise the oldest of all the fossil Mammalia known, namely, the *Microlestes antiquus*, of which animals, however, we as yet only know some few small molar teeth. These have been found in the uppermost strata of the Trias, in the Keuper, first in Ger-