Paul Belloni Du Chaillu Encyclopedia Article

Paul Belloni Du Chaillu

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Contents

Paul Belloni Du Chaillu Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Paul Belloni Du Chaillu.....3

Paul Belloni Du Chaillu

1835-1903

French-American traveller and anthropologist who explored West Africa extensively between 1855 and 1859. He was probably the first white man to see gorillas, which were only known to scientists of the time through a few skeletons. A second journey to that region (1863 to 1865) enabled him to confirm the presence of a long forgotten pygmy tribe in the African forests. Although his first published narrative (1861) was bitterly attacked, the validity of Du Chaillu's statements was subsequently verified by numerous independent investigations.