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**Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London**

London :Academic Press, [etc.],1833-1965.

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**1882:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/91167>

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The lower eyelid is transparent in this specimen, whilst in others it is very frequently rendered opaque by white veins.

The specimen must evidently be referred to Cope's *Phyllomedusa azurea*, in spite of the almost total absence of white areolations on the lower eyelid; but I do not believe that species to be distinct from *P. hypochondrialis*. The characters which, according to Mr. Cope, distinguish *P. hypochondrialis* from *P. azurea* are the presence of vomerine teeth, the absence of a white lateral streak, and the transparency of the lower eyelid. Mr. Cope does not say if his knowledge of the former species rests upon the type specimen in the Paris Museum. This I had opportunity of examining four years ago. I do not recollect whether I paid attention to the vomerine teeth; but I came to the conclusion that *P. hypochondrialis* and *P. azurea* are not specifically distinct. The transparency or opaqueness of the lower eyelid I do not consider a specific character in this or any other species of the genus *Phyllomedusa*; the presence or absence of a white streak from the mouth does not seem to me of much importance. As to the vomerine teeth in the typical specimen, doubts may be entertained of their presence; all the specimens in the British Museum lack these teeth.

3. On a small Collection of Rodents from South-Western Africa. By OLDFIELD THOMAS, F.Z.S., British Museum.

[Received February 7, 1882.]

(Plate XIV.)

The present collection was obtained by the late Mr. C. J. Andersson in Damaraland and the neighbouring countries, and has recently been acquired by the British Museum. The skins are unfortunately in a rather delapidated condition, but the dates and localities have in most cases been preserved. Altogether the Museum has received twenty-four of Mr. Andersson's specimens, belonging to ten species, of which the following list, owing to our ignorance of the Rodent fauna of this region, may be of some service.

1. *SCIURUS CONGICUS*, Kuhl, Beitr. z. Zool. p. 66 (1820).

Three specimens. Cunéné river, N. Damaraland, July 25, 1867.

2. *GERBILLUS TENUIS*, Smith, Ill. Zool. S. Afr., Mamm. pl. xxxvi. fig. 2 (1849).

Three specimens. Otjimbinque, February 7, 1865.

3. *PACHYROMYS AURICULARIS* (Smith), S. Afr. Quart. Journ. ii. p. 160 (1834).

Five specimens. Otjimbinque, February 6 and 7 and March 6, 1865.

This species is, as Mons. Huet has shown<sup>1</sup>, undoubtedly congeneric with the peculiar *Pachyuromys duprasi*, Lataste<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Le Nat. vol. i. p. 339 (1881).

<sup>2</sup> Le Nat. i. p. 314 (1880).

4. *SACCOSTOMUS LAPIDARIUS*. (Plate XIV. fig. 2.)

*Saccostomus lapidarius*, Peters, Reise n. Mossamb., Säug. p. 167 (1852).

Three specimens. Exact localities and dates not preserved.

This rare species has hitherto been recorded only from Mozambique, where Prof. Peters collected his types.

5. *MUS (ISOMYS) PUMILIO*, Sparrm. K. Vet.-Ak. Handl. 1784, p. 236.

Two specimens. *a*, ♀, Table Mountain, November 30; and *b*, ♂, "between Aamhouf and Hountop," Great Namaqualand, June 8, 1862.

6. *MUS (LEGGADA) MINUTOIDES*, Smith, S. Afr. Quart. Journ. ii. p. 157 (1834).

One specimen. Damaraland.

7. *MUS SILACEUS*, Wagn. Arch. f. Naturg. 1842, i. p. 11.

Four specimens. *a* & *b*, Otjimbinque, August 19 and 27, 1866; *c* & *d*, no exact localities.

8. *MUS NIGRICAUDA*, sp. n.

One specimen. ♂, Hountop R., Great Namaqualand, June 1, 1862.

For description see below.

9. *MUS COUCHA*, Sm. App. Rep. Exp. p. 43 (1836).

One specimen. Elephant's Vley, October 30, 1859.

10. *MUS*, sp.

One specimen. No exact locality.

There is thus one new species, No. 8, in the collection: and No. 10 might also turn out to be new; but it is represented by such a very indifferent specimen that I cannot determine this point with certainty.

The following is a description of No. 8, a very well-marked species, quite distinct from any other African Rat.

*MUS NIGRICAUDA*, sp. n. (Plate XIV. fig. 1.)

Fur rather long and coarse, composed of but one kind of hair, there being no under-fur. Centre of back mixed yellow and black, the greater part of the hairs having yellow distal halves, while others are wholly black. Sides of the head and body mixed white and black, the separation from the upper yellowish colour fairly well marked. Belly-hairs pure white to their bases. Ears rather large, thinly covered with short greyish hairs. Feet white above, the hairs longer at the ends of the toes, so as to conceal the claws. Tail slightly shorter than the head and body, nearly naked at its base, but thickly covered for its distal half both above and below with rather long shining black hairs, which form more or less of a pencil at the tip. Hind feet proportionally short, the six pads large and

rounded, occupying nearly the whole of the fore part of the sole. First hind toe reaching just to the base of the second; fifth to the end of the metacarpal of the fourth.

Molars much as in the subgenus *Isomys*, broad and rounded, with numerous small but well-marked cusps.

Approximate dimensions, in inches:—

Head and body.	Tail.	Hind foot.	Forearm and hand.	Ear- conch.	Skull.	Incisors to 1st upper molars.	Molar series.
6·2	5·8	1·01	1·18	0·65	—	·38	·21

Judging from the analogy of other species, I should imagine that *Mus nigricauda* is an arboreal animal; for in nearly all climbing Rodents we find the rather short feet, large rounded foot-pads, and more or less bushy tail characteristic of the present species. The Dormice, Squirrels, and, most closely analogous of all, the Climbing Vesper-mice of Tropical America (*Rhipidomys*), may be cited as examples of forms which possess the above mentioned accompaniments of an arboreal habit of life.

#### 4. Description of the Pterylosis of *Mesites*, with Remarks on the Position of that Genus. By W. A. FORBES, B.A., Prosector to the Society.

[Received February 7, 1882.]

When making some observations on the pterylographical and other peculiarities of *Eupetes macrocerus*<sup>1</sup>, I expressed regret at not having been able to obtain any specimen of *Mesites*, which in external appearance somewhat approaches *Eupetes macrocerus*, to study its pterylosis also.

Since then, having obtained through Herr G. Schneider, of Basel, a skin of *Mesites variegatus*, I have been able, from an examination of it, to complete our knowledge of this most peculiar form as regards the distribution of its feathers. All that was previously known of this part of the structure of *Mesites* was the existence in that bird of five pairs of powder-down patches<sup>2</sup>, M. A. Milne-Edwards in his paper on it<sup>3</sup> having confined his observations to its osseous and internal structure<sup>4</sup>. Those interested in the various opinions which have been held by naturalists as to the exact systematic position of *Mesites*, I will refer to M. Milne-Edwards's paper just quoted, only adding Mr. E. Bartlett's suggestion "that the

<sup>1</sup> P. Z. S. 1881, p. 838.

<sup>2</sup> Vide E. Bartlett, P. Z. S. 1877, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> Ann. Sci. Nat. (6) Zool. vii. 1878, art. 6.

<sup>4</sup> An imperfect skull, extracted from the present skin, shows that the palate is schizognathous, the recurved maxillo-palatines being free in the middle line, and the vomer small and pointed—points not evident in Milne-Edwards's figure, his specimen, I believe, being somewhat imperfect.