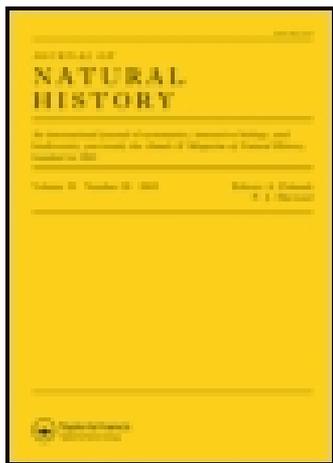


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silvery white, except that parafrontals show through blackish on vertical half. Thorax showing two very wide heavy black vittæ. Scutellum with faint sheen of silvery. Abdomen with bases of segments 2 to 4 silvery white, more broadly so on sides and venter, the rest shining black, but with faint sheen of silvery continuation in places as seen in very oblique lights. Legs black, tibiæ more or less reddish; bases of legs and pleuræ silvery. Wings lightly smoky yellowish, tegulæ pearly white.

Holotype, no. 19977 U.S. N. M.

XIV.—*A new Genus of African Mongooses, with a Note on Galeriscus.* By R. I. POCKOCK, F.R.S.

CYNICTIS SELOUSI was described by Mr. de Winton* on the evidence of a skull picked up by Mr. Selous near Bulawayo; and since the cranial and dental characters agreed tolerably closely with those of *C. penicillata*, the type of the genus *Cynictis*, no alternative generic reference was open to the describer.

Subsequently Mr. P. C. Reid sent to the British Museum a complete specimen caught on the Linyanti River, and Mr. de Winton published an illustrated description† of its colour, pointing out that the blackness of the legs and the absence of the rufous tint on the body confirm the skull-characters in differentiating *C. selousi* from *C. penicillata*.

In 1906 Mr. C. H. B. Grant secured the species at Wood-bush, in the north-eastern Transvaal, as recorded by Messrs. Thomas and Schwann‡, and in 1909 Mr. E. C. Chubb§ gave a list of several examples taken at Bulawayo and Inyamandhloven, in Matabeleland.

I am not aware of any later records or published particulars relating to the species.

The marked likeness in colour between *Cynictis selousi*, *Ichneumia albicauda*, and some species of *Bdeogale*—e. g., *B. nigripes*—induced me to examine the British Museum's specimens, consisting of the skins procured by Reid and Grant; and since *Cynictis*, *Ichneumia*, and *Bdeogale* can easily be distinguished by the number of the digits, the feet

* Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (6) xviii. p. 469 (1896). See also W. L. Selater, 'Fauna of South Africa, Mammals,' vol. i. p. 75 (1901).

† Proc. Zool. Soc. 1901, vol. i. pt. 1, pp. 2-3, pl. 1.

‡ *Ibid.* 1906, p. 588.

§ *Ibid.* 1909, p. 118.

naturally claimed attention first. The result was the discovery of the complete absence of all external trace of the first digit of the fore-foot—a feature bringing *C. selousi* into line with *Bdeogale* and severing it from *Cynictis*. It does not appear whether this character was detected by the authors above quoted and dismissed as a taxidermic accident or neglected as unimportant systematically, or not. Possibly the presence of the corresponding digit in *Cynictis penicillata* was for the moment forgotten*.

However that may be, the character is, in my opinion, quite sufficient for generic recognition. I propose, therefore, to place *C. selousi* in a new genus, which may be named and diagnosed as follows:—

PARACYNICTIS, gen. nov.

Related to *Cynictis*, but differing in the suppression of digit 1 of the fore-foot, the digital formula being 4—4 as in *Bdeogale*.

Type, *Cynictis selousi*, de Wint.

Two genera of African mongooses have the same digital formula as *Paracynictis*—namely, *Suricata* and *Bdeogale*; but with neither of the last two can the first be associated. *Suricata* occupies an isolated position in the group, and need not be further considered in this connection; but, as already stated, *Paracynictis selousi* bears such a close superficial resemblance to some species of *Bdeogale*, like *B. nigripes*, that the main reasons for its exclusion from that genus may be briefly given. Apart from the differences mentioned by de Winton in his original diagnosis, the skull of *Paracynictis selousi* is very like that of *Cynictis penicillata*, and shows no special resemblance to the massive skull of *Bdeogale*. The bulla is larger and more inflated than in *Cynictis*, and the partition divides it into two subequal chambers, whereas in *Cynictis* the posterior chamber is smaller than the anterior. In *Bdeogale*, on the contrary, the anterior chamber is smaller than the posterior, in *B. puisa* about half its size. Numerically the teeth of *Paracynictis* are as in *Bdeogale*, but, whereas in the former the in-jutting portions of pm^4 , m^1 , and m^2 of the upper jaw are transversely elongated and narrow, in *Bdeogale* they are very noticeably thicker and more rounded. Similar but less well-marked differences occur in the molars of the lower jaw.

* The coloured figure of *C. selousi* published by de Winton shows the feature in question quite plainly.

So far as external characters can be interpreted on dried skins, the feet of *Paracynictis* resemble those of *Bdeogale* not only in the number of the digits, but also in the extension of the hair over the metatarsus nearly or quite down to the plantar pad. But in *Paracynictis* the carpal pad is comparatively small, and, although the feet have been slit down the middle line beneath, it appears to me that the area between this pad and the plantar pad was wholly or mostly overgrown with hair. There may, however, have been a narrow strip of naked skin extending between the two pads. In *Bdeogale*, on the contrary, the carpal pad is large and joined to the plantar pad by a wide and distally widening naked area.

Finally, in *Paracynictis* it seems certain that the digits are longish, slender, and very imperfectly webbed, as in *Cynictis*, but in *Bdeogale* the thick short digits are webbed to approximately the same extent as in *Mungos*—that is to say, up to the base of the digital pads on the admedian side of each.

Although on paper it may appear that *Paracynictis* occupies an intermediate place genetically between *Cynictis* and *Bdeogale*, I do not think that is the true opinion to hold. *Paracynictis* seems to me, on the available evidence, to be nothing but an aberrant form of *Cynictis*, specialized by the loss of the first digit of the fore-foot. Hence it may be inferred that the occurrence of a similar defect in *Bdeogale* is an adaptive resemblance; and, without due consideration of other facts connected with the feet, one would be inclined to associate this defect with the adoption of a digitigrade gait. In the case of *Bdeogale*, which has short, compact, somewhat "canine" feet, this may be so—at least in part,—but the long-clawed feet of *Paracynictis* are fossorial rather than cursorial; and I suspect the suppression of the digit in question is connected with burrowing. Support for this suspicion is supplied by the independent incidence of a precisely similar character in *Suricata*, the fore-feet of which are essentially fossorial. A short weak pollex must be a hindrance rather than a help in digging amongst roots and stones; and the atrophy of the hallux may likewise be explained by the part the hind-feet play in raking backwards the loosened material of the burrow. So far as I am aware, there are no records of the habits of *Bdeogale* helping a decision as to whether the loss of the pollex and hallux is connected with digging or running.

The close resemblance in coloration above alluded to between *Paracynictis*, *Ichneumia*, and some species of *Bdeogale* is curious, since it does not appear to be attributable to mutual affinity. Special attention may be drawn to the

prevalent whiteness of the tail, the effect of which must be to render the animal comparatively visible, especially at night. In view of the existence in all mongooses of an anal sack and foul-smelling secretion of the anal glands, coupled with the known power in the case of *Mungos urva** of ejecting this secretion to a distance, as in the skunk, I suggest that the whiteness of the tail may be a warning attribute; and since *Ichneumia* geographically overlaps *Bdeogale* to the north and *Paracynictis* to the south, the likeness between the three may, perhaps, be Müllerian.

Note on Galeriscus.

In 1894 M. F. J. Jackson sent to the British Museum the skin, without the skull, of a Carnivore from Mianzini, in Masailand. This was described by Mr. Thomas † as a new genus and species, *Galeriscus jacksoni*, which was assigned to the Mustelidæ, and compared more particularly with the South-American genus *Galictis*, now known as *Grison*. Mr. Thomas subsequently came to the conclusion that the specimen must be referred to *Bdeogale*—a view fully confirmed by the structure of the ear, which is like that of *Mungos* rather than of *Grison*. Since I am not aware that this correction has ever been published, I take this occasion to point out that *Galeriscus* falls as a synonym of *Bdeogale*.

XV.—*On the Generic Names of certain Old-World Monkeys.*
By OLDFIELD THOMAS.

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THE generic names used for some of the Old-World monkeys have of late years been in a state of continual incertitude, so that for the langurs *Presbytis*, *Pygathrix*, and *Semnopithecus* have been used by different authors for different reasons, for the macaques *Simia*, *Pithecus*, and *Macacus*, and for the guenons *Cercopithecus* and *Lasiopyga*—not to mention the use of such little-known names as *Pan* and *Pongo* for the chimpanzees and oranges.

The question of *Pithecus* has recently been again brought

* Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (8) viii. p. 756 (1911).

† *Ibid.* (8) xiii. p. 522 (1894).