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Mr. Blandford having now published descriptions of the Japanese *Platypi*, I am able to give the names of the Japanese Histerids I found in their bores:—*Tryponeus fagi*, Lew., was feeding on *Platypus Severini*, Bland., and *T. venator*, Lew., on *P. calamus*, Bland.

XXVI.—On *Micoureus* * *griseus*, Desm., with the Description of a new Genus and Species of *Didelphyidæ*. By OLDFIELD THOMAS.

IN 1888 †, following the lead of previous writers, and, like them, without Paraguayan specimens for comparison, I identified Azara's "Micouré à queue longue" ‡, on which Desmarest's *Didelphys grisea* was based §, with the grey opossum of Minas Geraes and Rio Janeiro. This latter was named by Lund in 1841 *D. incana* ||, a designation which, following the above identification, was naturally placed by me as a synonym of *D. grisea*.

In his work on Minas Geraes opossums Dr. Winge ¶ accepted my identification with a note of warning as to its having been based merely on Rio Janeiran and not Paraguayan specimens, and this warning proves to have been fully justified, for the British Museum has now received the skin of an opossum from Corrientes which, while obviously distinct from the Minas Geraes form, agrees far better with Azara's description than the latter does.

The specimen was presented by Mr. Thomas Perrens, and was collected by his brother Richard near Goya, on the Parana. The following is a description of it:—

* The subgenera of *Didelphys* admitted in the 'Catalogue of Marsupials' having been since used by several writers of eminence as full genera, it seems better, as they are unquestionably perfectly natural groups and no principle is involved, to sink my own opinion on the subject and to accept them as such. This course I have also adopted in the case of the groups of *Cricetinae*, of which the majority of the American members were at one time joined, by American and European naturalists alike, into one genus "*Hesperomys*." If so joined, I still think, as formerly (P. Z. S. 1888, p. 133), that they should also be joined to *Cricetus*; but, split apart as they now are, they would all equally retain their own names, while *Cricetus* would again be used for Old-World forms only.

† Cat. Mars. B. M. p. 349.

‡ Quædr. Parag. i. p. 290 (1801).

§ Dict. Sci. Nat. xlvii. p. 393 (1827).

|| Blik. Bras. Dyrev. Dansk. Afh. viii. p. 237.

¶ 'Jordfundne og nulevende Pungdyr fra Lagoa Santa,' p. 107; E Mus. Lundii, 1893.

Size rather less than in *M. murinus*. Fur very short, soft, and fine. General colour of the back soft mouse-grey, almost exactly similar to ordinary specimens of *Mus musculus*, a resemblance by which Azara was also struck. Instead of this colour, however, fading off gradually towards the flanks and there meeting the white of the belly, as in most species, it is sharply defined and separated from the white underside by a broad band of paler grey, which gives the species a quite unique appearance. The darker grey commences between the eyes, broadens out to cover the crown and back of neck, reaches its greatest breadth (about 20 millim.) in the centre of the back, and narrows again sharply and decidedly as it reaches the tail. The eyes are clearly ringed with black, as stated by Azara, while the continuance forward on to the frontal region of the pale grey lateral band causes the appearance of pale outer orbital rings, separated in the middle line by the darker median colour, an appearance which, admirably described by Azara, has caused much trouble and confusion to workers who have tried to fit his description on to other species. Ears large and leafy, uniformly grey; their anterior basal prominence little developed. Under surface from chin to anus pure sharply defined white. Shoulders slightly darker than the lateral pale band; front of forearm paler grey, upper surface of hands white. Hind limbs similarly coloured, the lower legs grey, the feet white. Tail long, naked except for its basal quarter inch; grey above for three fourths its length, the terminal fourth and the whole of the under surface white.

Dimensions (approximate) of the skin of a young specimen with p.⁴ still in place :—

Head and body (apparently stretched) 105 millim.; tail 122; hind foot 14.

Skull: basal length (c.) 24; greatest breadth 14; inter-orbital breadth 4.1; nasals, length 10, greatest breadth 2.2; palate, length 13; combined lengths of $\frac{m. 1-3}{m. 1-3}$ 4.9.

The rediscovery of this pretty little opossum, of which, so far as I know, no naturalist has seen a specimen since Azara described it a century ago, is a matter of considerable interest, as it clears up a question which has puzzled many writers on the subject. The correspondence of Mr. Perrens's specimen with Azara's description is really remarkably close, as the dimensions agree exactly, the *Mus musculus*-like colour and texture of fur are present, and the puzzling outer pale rings round the eyes referred to by him are here produced by the division of the pale facial colour by the anterior extremity of the darker dorsal area.

Like Azara's, Mr. Perrens's specimen is young, having its milk-premolars still in position; and it is therefore to be hoped that he will obtain further and adult examples of this very beautiful little animal.

As to the affinities of the species, a comparison of its skull with those of other members of the group shows that it is really more nearly related to *M. elegans*, the Chilian opossum, than to *M. incanus*, as we should now call the Minas Geraes species, agreeing closely with the former in size and general form, and sharing with it the unique character of not having the nasals expanded posteriorly. In fact the only obvious distinction between the two skulls is the fact that the supraorbital edges of *M. griseus* are sharply square, even in the young specimen, and those of *M. elegans* are more or less rounded, at least up to an age considerably greater than that of the *M. griseus* now described. In external characters, however, the two are of course widely distinct.

DROMICIOPS, gen. nov.

General proportions much as in *Micoureus*. Ears short, hairy. Tail thick, incrassated at base, furry throughout (except just below extreme tip). Proportions of hind toes as in *Philander*.

Skull with a large rounded brain-case. Interorbital region broad, without ridges or postorbital processes. Broadest point of palate at front edge of $\frac{m}{3}$. Bullæ very large, perfect, the posterior, petrosal, portion inflated as much as the anterior. Lower jaw with the anterior part of each ramus splayed outwards, and with an unusually short symphysis.

Teeth.—Incisors broad, spatulate; $\frac{i}{1}$ more separated from its fellow of the opposite side than from $\frac{i}{2}$. Canines very short, the upper one not reaching a line drawn from the tip of $\frac{p}{4}$ to that of $\frac{i}{1}$, and the lower one also scarcely higher than the last premolar. Two anterior upper premolars subequal, rather smaller than the posterior one; below, each premolar is slightly larger than the one in front of it. Molars more rounded than in *Micoureus*, and recalling, both in form and the curvature of their series, those of *Philander*.

This genus differs from all other opossums by the short furry ears, the thick and hairy tail, the perfect and doubly inflated bullæ, the shortened canines, and the peculiar form and positions of the incisors. In other ways it presents some points characteristic of *Philander* and some of *Micoureus*; and it is to this latter that I suppose it must be considered most

nearly allied, although its differences are so great that, even were all the opossums still put in one genus, as formerly, its peculiar characters, and especially its doubly inflated bullæ, would nevertheless demand its generic distinction.

Dromiciops gliroides, sp. n.

Size and superficial appearance strongly recalling those of *Dromicia nana*, the Tasmanian Dormouse-Phalanger, a resemblance which has suggested the generic name. General colour above fawn-grey, the dorsal area decidedly darker than the sides. Face coloured as in *M. elegans*, that is, pale grey, with distinct black rings round the eyes. Ears short, rounded, their anterior basal prominence little developed; their backs covered basally with thick fur like that of the crown, and terminally with thin yellowish hairs; altogether they present a great contrast to the large and practically naked ears of *Micoureus*. Crown and nape of neck rufous brown or cinnamon, lighter on the sides of the neck, where the hairs have prominent subterminal white rings. Similarly on the sides of the body there is a large whitish patch just behind the shoulder, another in front, and a third just behind the hips, so that the whole animal, when viewed from the side, presents an alternation of light and dark areas, beginning with the whitish cheeks, followed in succession by a darker colour below the ears, then lighter on the sides of the neck, darker on the shoulder, centre of belly, and hips, each of these parts being separated by the lighter areas already mentioned. The dark of the shoulder is united above to that of the back, but that of the hips is separated by a narrow longitudinal light line passing approximately along the pelvic bones. These variations in colour are in no case very conspicuous or sharply defined. Belly dirty yellowish white, the grey of the bases of the hairs showing through. Outer sides of limbs and backs of hands brown; inner sides and backs of feet dull white. Soles with five very prominent transversely striated pads—a long one across the base of the hallux, three at the bases of the other toes, and a rather smaller postero-external pad. Terminal digital pads large, surpassing the claws, longitudinally striated. Tail very thick at its base and tapering rapidly and evenly to the tip, its basal third thickly clothed with shining fawn-coloured fur like that of the body; its terminal two thirds almost equally well clothed, but the hairs are straighter and nearly uniformly dark brown. Below, the hairs are brownish white throughout. The naked part of the tail is

confined to a narrow strip about half an inch long on the underside of the tip.

Skull in its general form rather smooth and rounded, with a large rounded brain-case and short muzzle. Nasals expanded behind. Interorbital region broad, convex, scarcely flattened, its edges without beads or ridges; temporal ridges obsolete. Palate broad, the line of the incisors more semi-circular than usual; anterior palatine foramina very short, only extending to the level of the back of $\frac{1}{2}$; broadest point of palate at the front of $\frac{3}{4}$ instead of at the back. Posterior nares broad, their mesial septum continued back some way as a narrow ridge along the base of the skull.

Teeth as described above.

Dimensions of the type (B. M. 92.5.9.3), an aged male, preserved as a skin:—

Head and body (c.) 126 millim.; tail (c.) 102; hind foot (damped and extended) 18; ear, from notch, 14.

Skull: basal length 26; greatest breadth 16.8; nasals, length 11.1, greatest breadth 4.4, least breadth 1.9; interorbital constriction 5.3; palate, length 14, breadth outside $\frac{3}{4}$ 10; palatal foramen 1.6.

Teeth: height of upper canine behind 1.3; horizontal length of $\frac{4}{5}$ 1.0; combined length of $\frac{1}{2}$ 4.6, of four lower molars 5.8.

Hab. Huite, N.E. Chiloe Island. "Taken in the fork of a large tree."

Coll. Dr. Robert O. Cunningham, H.M.S. 'Nassau,' May 20, 1868.

This interesting little opossum is that referred to by Dr. Cunningham, in his 'Notes on the Natural History of the Straits of Magellan'*, as *Didelphys elegans*, to which it has a certain superficial resemblance. The specimen was presented by him to Prof. Huxley, and in 1892 was given to the Museum by the latter's successor, Prof. G. B. Howes. The 'Catalogue of Marsupials' being finished, the skin was, on Cunningham's authority, put away as *D. elegans*, and it was only during the examination necessary in working out the first part of this paper that its striking characteristics were noticed.

* P. 362 (1871).