

by A. H. Howell in his monograph, "Review of American Marmots," North American Fauna, No. 37, 1915.

A short time after the marmot "Fauna" appeared, I collected a number of woodchucks in Vermont and sent skins and skulls to Mr. Howell, who kindly examined them. He pronounced them all (seven, if I remember rightly) *Marmota monax rufescens* and remarked that some further revision of New England woodchucks would be necessary. In his review he writes that material from northern New England is lacking. The specimens sent Mr. Howell were from Rutland, from Ferrisburg, in the Champlain Valley, and two from Lunenburg on the east side of the state near the Canada line. There were none from Hartland and immediate vicinity but it is reasonable to suppose that the woodchucks there are the same as in Rutland, 35 miles away.—GEORGE L. KIRK, *Rutland, Vt.*

ANOTHER TREE-CLIMBING WOODCHUCK

The recent article by Mr. Harold St. John in the Journal of Mammalogy (II, No. 4, 1921, 207), concerning "A Tree-climbing Woodchuck" prompts me to relate my own experience with another tree-climbing individual in Iowa.

On July 2, 1914, while doing some field work to which I was assigned by the director of the Iowa Geological Survey three miles northwest of Waukon, Iowa, I disturbed an adult woodchuck (*Marmota monax monax*) which was feeding in an open pasture. Immediately the animal gave a sort of grunt and galloped toward a small white oak a short distance away. On arriving at the tree which was between eight and ten inches in diameter, it did not hesitate at all but climbed, without apparent difficulty, to the first limb which was at least eight feet above the ground. So great was my surprise that I stopped and stared at the woodchuck for a moment, then slowly walked toward the tree. The rodent partly lay across the lowermost limb eyeing me and breathing heavily after its exertion. After watching it for a few minutes, during which time it remained in the same position, I secured a heavy club and dispatched it by breaking its back so that the skull was left intact. The latter is preserved in the University Museum as accession no. 25697.

An examination of the greatly distended stomach revealed only clover, grass, and other vegetation. Unfortunately I did not secure a photograph of the animal. This species is very common in the driftless, hilly area of northeastern Iowa where it does considerable damage and as a consequence of which a vain effort is being made to control it through the bounty system.—DAYTON STONER, *University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.*

WOODCHUCKS CLIMB TREES

Mr. Harold St. John, in the November, 1921, issue of the Journal of Mammalogy relates the case of the woodchuck, *Marmota monax preblorum*, climbing a tree and shows a photograph as evidence. He seems to think that such an occasion is unique and farther states that he had difficulty in convincing people of the fact.

I can assure Mr. St. John that I have frequently seen woodchucks climb trees. Two or three incidents stand out vividly. When a boy on the farm at home I on two occasions stoned woodchucks out of trees where some farm dogs had chased them. As I recall, both of these chucks were small and immature, but a few years

ago I saw a very large one in the top of a black walnut, where it had also taken refuge from the dogs. While such cases may be uncommon, no doubt there are many other observers who have seen woodchucks climb trees.—CLEVELAND P. HICKMAN, *West Virginia University, Morgantown, W. Va.*

MORE TREE-CLIMBING WOODCHUCKS

The note in the November Journal of Mammalogy on a Tree-Climbing Wood-Chuck by Mr. Harold St. John recalls an experience of the past summer. I was engaged in listing the birds of the new Allegany State Park, Cattaraugus County, New York, when one day, July 16, 1921, I came upon a woodchuck (*Marmota monax preblorum*) about ten feet up in a dogwood tree. I had not seen the animal climb there, and do not know whether it climbed there because of my approach or was already there when I approached. The tree was about six inches in diameter, and leaned somewhat to the south which was the downhill side. This tree was in the midst of a large sized patch of woodland, and a considerable distance from any open country. I tossed a few sticks at the animal expecting it to jump or run down the tree, but while it seemed frightened, it seemed also unwilling to leave the tree.

After this experience I asked others who lived in that vicinity the question "Have you ever seen a woodchuck climb a tree?" Almost invariably I got the answer "Yes," with a statement that they often did it to escape enemies. Returning to my home in southern Connecticut I tried the question on people in that vicinity with the answer that they had never heard of such a thing, most of them adding that woodchucks seldom were found near trees. From this experience I concluded that the tree-climbing habit in woodchucks is something that is decidedly local, belonging chiefly to animals that live in wooded regions, rather than to those that live in open country.—ARETAS A. SAUNDERS, *Fairfield, Conn.*

THE TREE-CLIMBING HABITS OF WOODCHUCKS

In the Journal of Mammalogy for November, 1921, there is a photograph and an excellent description of a "Tree-Climbing Woodchuck." I did not know that it was considered unusual for woodchucks to climb trees, but some of my friends think it is.

As a boy and young man, I lived in the hilly region of southwestern Pennsylvania where woodchucks were very common, often becoming a nuisance. I now recall five instances of woodchucks climbing trees. They were all put up by dogs and I observed them in every case. The first live woodchuck that I ever saw was one that a big dog ran up a butternut tree that grew along the border of a woods. The chuck was not full grown, but it went to a height of about 15 feet. My oldest brother climbed the tree and shook it down. A few years later, I was one day walking with my father through a woods containing almost a pure stand of white oak trees. Our dog got between a woodchuck and its burrow and chased it up one of the trees. This oak was nearly two feet in diameter with no branches for nearly 30 feet. The chuck continued to the first stopping place, a large lateral branch or open fork. My father threw two or three stones at it, but failed to hit it. The animal kept looking down at the barking dog and as it did so, it began to shake and wobble and finally tumbled to the ground. This would indicate, to me, that woodchucks are not familiar with high climbing. This one