

A NEW CARNIVORE FROM BRITISH EAST AFRICA

BY GERRIT S. MILLER, JR.

CURATOR, DIVISION OF MAMMALS, U. S. NATIONAL MUSEUM

WITH THREE PLATES

A series of seven specimens of *Otocyon* collected by Dr. Edgar A. Mearns and Mr. J. Alden Loring, of the Smithsonian African Expedition, at Naivasha Station, British East Africa, represents a species readily distinguishable from *O. megalotis* of the Cape region. It may be named and described as follows:¹

OTOCYON VIRGATUS, sp. nov.

Type: Cat. No. 162125, U. S. N. M. Adult male (skin and skull), collected at Naivasha Station, British East Africa, August 8, 1909, by J. Alden Loring. Original number 6962.

Diagnosis: Size and general appearance as in *Otocyon megalotis*, but underparts rich buff instead of whitish, and tail with conspicuous black dorsal stripe. Skull differing from that of *O. megalotis* in the flatter less inflated audital bullæ and absence of notch between angular and subangular processes of mandible. Fourth lower molar normally with two small but evident posterior cusps, its elements as in the preceding tooth.

Color: Entire dorsal surface from between ears to base of tail a nearly uniform coarse grizzle of black and light cream-buff, the cream-buff in excess everywhere except along median line, where the two colors are about evenly balanced; long hairs blackish throughout except for a cream-buff annulation about 5 mm. wide situated 5 to 10 mm. below tips; hairs of underfur drab-gray through basal half, then a rather light ochraceous-buff to tips, this color nearly overlaid by the grizzle of the longer hairs, but appearing irregularly at surface where hairs are disarranged; sides of body like back, but becoming suffused with ochraceous-buff below; underparts ochraceous-buff, brighter and more nearly a clear buff on throat, duller and

¹This paper is the third dealing with the results of the expedition. The other papers are Nos. 1879 and 1880 in the same series as the present publication.

more brownish between fore legs; axillary region pale cream-buff in rather noticeable contrast; crown from between ears to between eyes a light indefinite grizzled gray, contrasting slightly with region behind it and conspicuously with the dark hair-brown of muzzle, forehead, upper eyelid (about 3 mm.) and upper half of cheek; lower half of cheek nearly like crown, but with a slight buffy tinge; chin dark hair-brown at extreme front, then blackish to a little behind angle of mouth; outer surface of ear between ochraceous-buff and wood-brown at base, darkening abruptly to a dark sepia on terminal third, the extreme tip blackish; margin of ear (except at blackish tip) pale cream-buff, a sprinkling of hairs of the same color on inner surface; fore legs ochraceous-buff, heavily clouded with sepia on outer surface, and darkening to blackish on feet; hind legs ochraceous-buff on inner surface, grizzled like sides externally, but more clouded with black, especially along anterior region of juncture between grizzled and ochraceous-buff areas; hind feet blackish, the soles tinged with ochraceous-buff; tail ochraceous-buff, grizzled like back at extreme base above, elsewhere essentially clear except for the black tip (about 80 mm.) and the sharply defined black dorsal stripe about 25 mm. wide extending from black terminal area to about base of middle third of tail, where it abruptly ends.

Skull: As compared with that of *Otocyon megalotis* as figured by Huxley² the skull of *O. virgatus* (plates LX-LXII) shows no special peculiarities in general form. The audital bulla is, however, less globular in outline, and its lower border does not descend so far below level of paroccipital process and glenoid surface. The mandible on the other hand differs strikingly from that of *O. megalotis* in the complete absence of a re-entrant notch between angular and subangular processes, the subangular region thus much resembling that of *Urocyon* except for its greater development backward so that its posterior edge lies below articular surface instead of below middle of coronoid process. Angular process apparently less curved upward than in *O. megalotis*. Coronoid process broad and relatively low, its posterior border sloping distinctly forward instead of nearly perpendicular.

Teeth: Though in general agreeing with those of the southern animal the teeth of *Otocyon virgatus* show certain peculiarities: pm_3 without trace of the "sharp cusp at the anterior end of its base" mentioned by Huxley (p. 260); m_1 much less reduced than that of *O. megalotis*, its elements exactly as in m_3 . It is also worthy of

² Proc. Zool. Soc. London, 1880, pp. 257-258 and 263.

note that a fourth upper molar is not present in any of the eight skulls seen.

Measurements: Type: head and body, 550; tail, 281; hind foot, 137; ear from crown (dry), 105. Skull: condylobasal length, 113.6; basilar length, 106.8; zygomatic breadth, 64.8; mastoid breadth, 47.6; breadth of braincase, 43.4; postorbital constriction, 29.0; interorbital constriction, 23.0; breadth of rostrum over canines, 18.6; depth of braincase (median), 30.8; mandible, 86.2; maxillary toothrow exclusive of incisors, 44.4; mandibular toothrow exclusive of incisors, 51.6.

Specimens examined: Eight, the seven already referred to, and an adult taken at Taveta, British East Africa, in 1889, by Dr. W. L. Abbott.

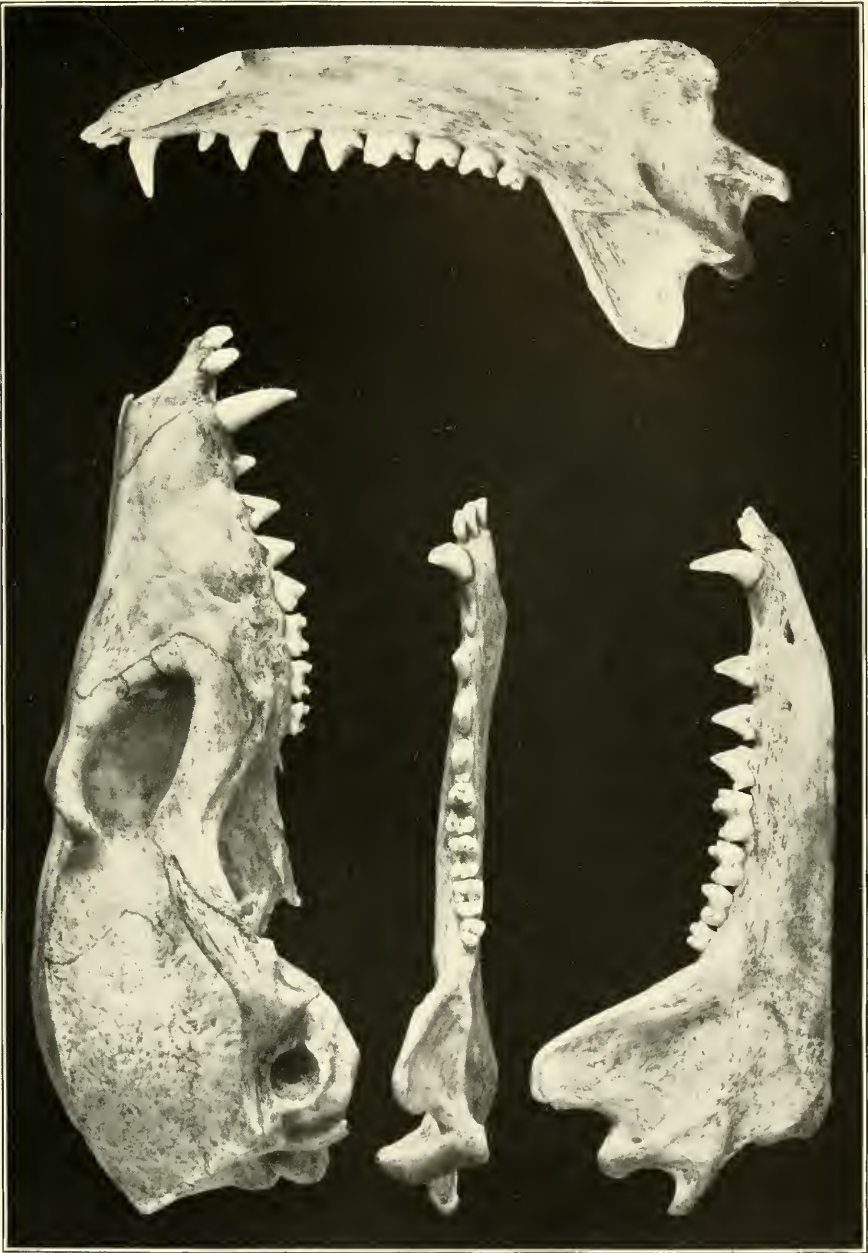
Remarks: The specimens do not vary noticeably among themselves. In color the back is sometimes more buffy than in the type, owing to a more free appearance at surface of the ochraceous-buff underfur. Equally slight differences in the exact shade of buff of underparts are also to be found. The pattern of marking of the tail is strictly uniform in all the skins. In cranial and dental characters there are no variations worthy of note.



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