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FROM AFRICA

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THREE NEW MURINE RODENTS FROM AFRICA

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The following heretofore overlooked forms of murine rodents have been found in the collections made by the Smithsonian African Expedition in 1909 and 1910.

ARVICANTHIS ABYSSINICUS CENTROSUS, subsp. nov.

Type from Rhino Camp, Lado. No. 165167, U. S. National Museum, skin and skull of male adult (teeth moderately worn), collected January 21, 1910, by J. Alden Loring. Orig. No. 8817.

Subspecific characters.—Differs from *Arvicanthis abyssinicus rubescens* Wroughton of Uganda in its much darker color and larger teeth.

Color of type specimen.—General appearance of upperparts blackish gray, or blackish grizzled with grayish buff; hairs of back mostly broadly blackish at base, with subapical area of yellowish buff, and tip of black; mixed with these are numerous hairs wholly black in color. Rump and lower back slightly more reddish brown than head, shoulders, and forward parts of back; sides lighter than back, the undercolor paler and the buff rings on the hairs less yellowish. Underparts dark grizzly drab, all the hairs blackish at bases and with drab-gray tips. Ears well clothed with black and yellowish buff hairs, much the color of head and upper back. The buffy ochraceous nose and eye-ring are faintly marked. Hands and feet blackish brown, the feet with black centers. Tail bicolor, brownish black above, grayish buff below.

Skull and teeth.—Skull essentially as in *Arvicanthis abyssinicus rubescens*; teeth distinctly larger.

Measurements of type specimen.—Head and body, 129 millimeters; tail vertebræ, 114; hind foot, dry, without claws, 29. Skull: Condylbasal length, 31.2; zygomatic breadth, 16.5; interorbital breadth, 4.8; length of nasals, 11.7; length of mandible, 20.5; upper tooth row, alveoli, 6.9; lower tooth row, alveoli, 7.0.

Specimens examined.—Sixteen, all from the type locality.

Remarks.—This new subspecies of *Arvicanthis abyssinicus* resembles *A. a. nubilans* of the Kisumu Province, British East Africa,

very much in color, but is a slightly smaller animal with a longer tail. The ranges of the two forms are separated by that of *A. a. rubescens*, which occupies the eastern side of the Nile system in Uganda, from Ankole to Gondokoro. The Nile appears to be an effective barrier between the ranges of the subspecies *rubescens* and *centrosus*. In Lado this new form ranges with *Arvicanthis testicularis jebela* Heller, but specimens can readily be separated from skins of that form by their much darker color, above and below (*jebela* has a white belly, sharply marked from the color of the flanks), and by the shorter tail.

DASYMYS HELUKUS NIGRIDIVS, subsp. nov.

Type from Naivasha Station, British East Africa, skin and skull of female adult (teeth moderately worn), collected August 20, 1909, by J. Alden Loring. Orig. No. 7054.

Subspecific characters.—Differs from *Dasymys helukus helukus* and *D. h. savannus* in larger size and darker color; skull and teeth larger. Fur long and silky.

Color of type specimen.—General color of upperparts brownish fuscous, darker on mid-dorsal line where there is considerable purple and green iridescence; paler and more brownish on sides, where the colors blend into the much lighter grayish buff of the underparts. The upperparts are everywhere speckled with fine lines of golden buff; underfur dark neutral gray. Head and cheeks brownish gray, with considerable of the greenish iridescence around eyes and between ears; ears dull seal brown. Underparts grayish buff, the hair long; neutral gray, tipped with olive buff. Hands and feet thinly covered with long hairs of brown, darker than in the neighboring forms. Tail closely annulated; the numerous hairs of brown above and buff below not covering the scales.

Skull and teeth.—Skull somewhat larger than in either of the neighboring forms, *helukus* and *savannus*, with higher sinciput, heavier rostrum, and greater interorbital breadth. Teeth larger.

Measurements of type specimen.—Head and body, 176; tail vertebrae, 162; hind foot, 36 (dry, without claws, 33.2). Skull: Condylbasal length, 38.4; zygomatic breadth, 20.1; length of nasals, 13.8; interorbital breadth, 4.7; upper tooth row, alveoli, 8.0; lower tooth row, alveoli, 7.6.

Specimens examined.—Nineteen from the type locality and one from the Aberdare Mountains at 7,000 feet.

Remarks.—This is the largest of the British East African forms of *Dasymys*. It is further distinguished by its very dark color (almost blackish in some lights), long, silky pelage, and larger skull and teeth. Skins of young, about half-grown animals, are especially dark as compared with the young of *Dasymys h. savannus*.

MUS BELLUS PETILUS, subsp. nov.

Type from Southern Guaso Nyiro River, British East Africa. No. 162397, U. S. National Museum, skin and skull of male adult (teeth much worn), collected June 28, 1909, by J. Alden Loring. Orig. No. 6450.

Subspecific characters.—Like *Mus bellus bellus* (Thomas) of Machakos, but with smaller, more slender skull.

Measurements of type specimen.—Head and body, 54; tail vertebrae, 44; hind foot, dry, without claws, 12.3. Skull: Condylbasal length, 16.1; zygomatic breadth, 8.4; breadth of braincase, 7.9; length of nasals, 7.0; length of mandible, 9.8; upper tooth row, alveoli, 2.9.

Specimens examined.—Three from the Southern Guaso Nyiro and one from Naivasha.

Remarks.—Compared with large series of specimens of the neighboring form, *Mus bellus bellus*, the specimens of the new subspecies *petilus* are sharply distinguished by their small, slender skulls. The color of the skins is as in true *bellus*, and therefore is very different from the color of *M. b. vicinus* and *M. b. enclava*, both of which have larger skulls, like true *bellus*.