

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

A NEW RABBIT FROM MARGARITA ISLAND,
VENEZUELA.*

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The small collection of mammals taken on Margarita Island, Venezuela, by Lieut. Wirt Robinson during the summer of 1895 proves to be exceptionally rich in novelties. Of the six species that it contains, two † have already been described in these Proceedings as new, while I now find that a third, the rabbit previously recorded as *Lepus brasiliensis*, differs specifically from its mainland representative. It may stand as :

Lepus margaritæ sp. nov.

Lepus brasiliensis Robinson, Proc. U. S. National Museum, XVIII, p. 651.

Type No. 63217, United States National Museum, ♂ adult, collected on Margarita Island, Venezuela, July 1, 1895, by Lieut. Wirt Robinson, U. S. Army. Original number 369.

General characters.—In size, cranial characters, and general appearance most like *Lepus cumanicus* Thomas ‡ of the adjacent mainland, but with under side of tail dull yellowish brown instead of white, rump strongly suffused with rufous, and sides of head without conspicuous black spot between eye and base of ear.

Color.—General color of back and sides a conspicuous grizzle of blackish brown and pale whitish buff, the buff slightly paler on sides, and the black somewhat heavier on back. Soft, woolly under fur light plum-

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† *Rhogeëssa minutilla* Miller, and *Marmosa robinsoni* Bangs.

‡ Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., 6th ser., XX, p. 552, December, 1897.

beous. Shoulders, rump, upper surface of tail and outer sides of all four legs strongly suffused with rufous. Nape patch clear rufous. Crown essentially like back, only more finely grizzled and the buff darker. Whole side of head light gray, shaded with dark brown, the gray clearer around eye (where it forms an indistinct ring) and on sides of muzzle, the brown most conspicuous on cheeks below and behind eye. Whole under parts, with the exception of a broad buffy collar, dull white, faintly darkened by the plumbeous bases of the hairs. The white extends on inner side of front legs to wrists and on hind legs to base of claws. Tail colored like the rump, slightly paler and less rufous ventrally than dorsally.

Measurements.—Total length (skin), 350; length to end of outstretched hind feet, 445; * tail to end of hairs, 35.6; * hind foot, 86; ear from crown, 70; width of ear, 38. Skull: greatest length, 79; basilar length, 61; zygomatic breadth, 36.4; nasals, length 36.8; combined width, 18; incisive foramen, 12.4 x 7.4; maxillary tooth row (alveoli), 15; mandible, 58; mandibular tooth row (alveoli), 15.

General remarks.—Were it not for its longer ears, slightly smaller size, and short, dark colored tail, *Lepus margaritæ* would bear a very strong superficial resemblance to *L. sylvaticus transitionalis* Bangs. Its relationships, however, are, as already pointed out, with its nearest geographical ally, *L. cumanicus*.

* From fresh specimen by collector.