

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

GENERAL NOTES.

NOTE ON THE INDIGENOUS RODENT OF SANTO DOMINGO.

Hitherto the only known specimen of the indigenous rodent of Santo Domingo has been the type, sent to Paris by Ricord, and described as a new genus and species, *Plagiodontia ædium*, by F. Cuvier in 1836.* The discovery of three left lower mandibles (one with dentition complete), a tibia, and part of a pelvis among some miscellaneous bones taken by W. M. Gabb from a kitchen midden in a cave on the shore of San Lorenzo Bay, Santo Domingo, 1869-71, is therefore of much interest.† Two of the mandibles represent adult individuals, while the third is not mature. Some of the measurements of the two adults (Nos. 200,411 and 200,412 U. S. National Museum) are: length from projection behind articular surface to posterior border of alveolus of incisor, 48, 50; depth through articular process, 24.0, 24.6; diastema, 11, 13; toothrow (alveoli), 19.0, 20.2; first lower molar (alveolus), 4.4 x 4.4, 5.0 x 5.0. In both of the adults the teeth were still growing from a basal pulp, so that the enamel pattern undergoes no change at successive levels from crown to base. The pattern is correctly represented by Cuvier (pl. 17, fig. 5); it is identical in character with that of *Adelphomys* from the Santa Cruz beds of Patagonia as figured by Ameghino ‡ and Scott.§ The upper cheek teeth as figured by Cuvier (pl. 17, fig. 4) are equally like those of a Santa Cruz specimen regarded by Scott (pl. 65, fig. 13) as representing the maxillary dentition of *Scleromys* Ameghino, a genus based on lower teeth differing widely from those of *Adelphomys* and *Plagiodontia*. The exact meaning of the discrepancies can not now be explained. These conclusions, however, seem justified: that *Plagiodontia* is not closely related to *Capromys*, and that the occurrence of these two genera and of *Amblyrhiza* in the West Indies during relatively recent times indicates the probability of a once-abundant Antillean representation of the Hystricine group.

—Gerrit S. Miller, Jr.

* Ann. Sci. Nat., Paris, ser. 2, vol. 6, p. 347.

† The cave and kitchen midden are described in Gabb's account of the topography and geology of Santo Domingo. Trans. Amer. Philos. Soc., n. s., vol. 15, pp. 146-147. 1873.

‡ Mam. Fos. Argent., pl. 6, fig. 3 c.

§ Rep. Princeton Univ. Exped. Patagonia, vol. 5 (paleont. 2), pl. 65, fig. 21.

REMAINS OF TWO SPECIES OF CAPROMYS FROM ANCIENT BURIAL SITES IN JAMAICA.

While the indigenous Antillean rodents of the genus *Capromys* are represented by several species in Cuba, only one, *C. brownii* Fischer, has hitherto been found in Jamaica. Two distinct members of the genus are each represented by a toothless mandible and two femurs taken from ancient burial sites near Salt River, Jamaica, by R. C. McCormack and now in the U. S. National Museum. One of these is identical with the known living Jamaican species. The other, differing from *Capromys brownii* in conspicuously smaller size (greatest length of femur without epiphysis about 56 mm. instead of about 68 mm., lower toothrow 16.4 instead of 19.4) and in the obviously reduced condition of the third lower molar, I am unable to distinguish from *C. thoracatus* (True) of Little Swan Island. Whether or not this apparent identity is due merely to the incompleteness of the individuals represented by the Jamaican specimens, and what such identity might mean should it ever be proved to exist, are questions that can not now be answered; but in any event the discovery of these smaller bones in Jamaica is an interesting fact.

—Gerrit S. Miller, Jr.

THE FIRST NEW ZEALAND CRINOID.

Prof. William B. Benham, of the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, has been so kind as to submit to me for determination the first crinoid ever discovered in New Zealand waters.

It was collected by Mr. Percy Seymour from a row-boat in about 15-20 feet of water at Preservation Inlet on the west coast of the South (or Middle) Island. Three specimens in all were secured.

Of the fauna of Preservation Inlet Professor Benham writes: "From the same locality some Hydrocorallines and Antipatharians were obtained, and a Pennatulid, all of which are 'Australian' in their affinities. The fauna of the west coast of New Zealand is little known, but it differs considerably from that of the east, south, or north coasts of the island. The west coast is difficult to get at and is only sparsely inhabited, and few of us naturalists have been able to collect there except very superficially and sporadically, as boats only visit Preservation Inlet very irregularly, and once there one never knows how long one might be compelled to stay, as there is no road across the forest clad mountains."

It is interesting to note that this crinoid belongs to a species characteristic of, and confined to, southern and southeastern Australia and Tasmania, *Comanthus (Cenolia) trichoptera* (J. Müller).*

The twenty-eight arms of the specimen sent by Professor Benham are 115 mm. long; the centrodorsal is large, thick-discoidal, the dorsal pole broad and flat, with the centre depressed; the cirri are XL-L, 24-27 (usually 26-27), 22 mm. to 25 mm. long.

The relatively long cirri, which are composed of more numerous segments than the cirri of the typical form, would appear to indicate that this specimen represents a recognizable variety, probably peculiar to New Zealand, for which I propose the name *Comanthus trichoptera benhami*. The type specimen is the property of the University of Otago.

—Austin H. Clark.

* See "Recent Crinoids of Australia," Sydney, 1911, p. 755.