

PROCEEDINGS  
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BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

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DESCRIPTIONS OF FIVE NEW RODENTS FROM THE  
COAST REGION OF ALASKA.

BY C. HART MERRIAM.

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***Microtus sitkensis* sp. nov.**

*Type* from Sitka, Alaska. No. 73839, ♂ ad. U. S. Nat. Mus., Biological Survey Coll. Collected August 3, 1895, by C. P. Streater. Original No. 4745.

*General characters*.—Similar in color and general appearance to *M. californicus* in corresponding pelage, but somewhat darker and more reddish brown; belly washed with pale buffy fulvous; ears smaller; tail rather short, upper side black. Cranial and dental characters distinctive.

*Color*.—Upper parts uniform grizzled brown, not conspicuously lined with black hairs, and with a distinct 'reddish brown' suffusion, especially on rump and neck, which is probably peculiar to late summer pelage; under parts plumbeous (without white), the belly washed with ochraceous buff; tail sharply bicolor, black above, white beneath; fore and hind feet and ankles dusky.

*Cranial and dental characters*.—Skull long and narrow, very broad interorbitally; braincase rounded (not angular); interparietal subtriangular and rather small; zygomata not spreading; audital bullæ large and rather elongated (not rounded); incisive foramina very narrow and slit like, falling far short of molars; teeth as in subgenus *Microtus*; first lower molar with 3 closed loops on inner side and 2 on outer side, the anterior loop with no external and only 1 internal salient angle.

*Remarks*.—While externally *Microtus sitkensis* resembles *M. californicus*, its cranial characters place it in a different group, along with the small *M. kadiacensis*.

*Measurements*.—Type specimen: total length, 155; tail vertebræ, 42; hind foot, 23. *Cranial measurements*: basal length, 25; zygomatic breadth, 14; palatal length, 13 [to incisor]; interorbital constriction, 4.2.



**Microtus kadiacensis** sp. nov.

*Type* from Kadiak Island, Alaska. No. 65827, ♀ ad. U. S. Nat. Mus., Biological Survey Coll. Collected Sept. 12, 1893, by B. J. Bretherton. Original No. 213.

*General characters*.—Similar to *M. sitkensis* in color and general appearance, but much smaller, somewhat paler, and under parts white instead of ochraceous buff; tail and ears rather short.

*Color*.—Upper parts uniform grizzled pale brownish with pale dull fulvous suffusion, not conspicuously lined with black hairs; under parts plumbeous, strongly washed with pure white; tail sharply bicolor, dusky above, white beneath; fore and hind feet grayish brown.

*Cranial and dental characters*.—Skull similar to that of *M. sitkensis*, but very much smaller; interparietal much more elongated transversely and narrower; audital bullæ very much smaller and narrower; postpalatal pits deeper; teeth essentially as in *sitkensis*, but first lower molar with only 2 completely closed loops on each side.

*Measurements*.—Type specimen, measured in flesh by collector: total length, 141; tail vertebræ, 23 [probably 33]; hind foot, 18 [probably 19 or 20]. *Cranial measurements*: basal length, 23.5; zygomatic breadth, 13.5; palatal length, 12.8; interorbital constriction, 3.8.

**Microtus unalascensis** sp. nov.

*Type* from Unalaska, Alaska. No.  $\frac{30772}{42672}$ , ♀ im. U. S. Nat. Mus., Biological Survey Coll. Collected Aug. 13, 1891, by C. Hart Merriam. Original No. z.

*General characters*.—Similar to *M. kadiacensis*, but apparently somewhat darker; audital bullæ much shorter and more globular; front lower molar with two closed and two open loops on inner side, and two closed and no open loops on outer side.

*Color*.—(Specimen immature): Upper parts yellowish brown, darkest on head; under parts plumbeous washed with whitish; tail sharply bicolor, narrowly black above, broadly white below; fore and hind feet grayish.

*Measurements*.—Type specimen (not full grown): total length, 122; tail vertebræ, 28; hind foot, 19.

*Remarks*.—This species, which resembles *M. ratticeps* of Europe in the enamel pattern of the first lower molar, is closely related to *M. kadiacensis*, from which it may be distinguished at a glance by the much shorter and more globular audital bullæ and the pattern of  $\overline{m1}$ .

During the single night spent at Unalaska on my return from the Seal Islands, I caught several of these Voles along the edges of a small pond on the outskirts of the Aleutian village of Iluliuk. Unfortunately, all but one were eaten by Ravens shortly after daylight. The one secured had dragged the trap into the water and drowned out of reach of the Ravens.



**Peromyscus sitkensis** sp. nov.

*Type* from Sitka, Alaska. No. 73809, ♂ ad. U. S. Nat. Mus., Biological Survey Coll. Collected July 30, 1895, by C. P. Streater. Original No. 4720.

*General characters*.—Size very large—much the largest of the species occurring north of Mexico except *P. californicus*, from which it differs in so many characters as to require no comparison; tail long; ears medium or rather small; coloration dark, in summer pelage reddish brown.

*Color*.—Upper parts brown, becoming russet posteriorly on back, rump, and sides; ring round eye (broadest in front of eye) and posterior aspect of ankles, dusky; under parts white, the plumbeous under fur showing through; fore and hind feet whitish; tail sharply bicolor, blackish above, broadly white below; ears dusky, narrowly edged with whitish.

*Cranial characters*.—Skull large; braincase rather flat; rostrum greatly elongated; pterygoid fossæ unusually developed. Contrasted with the skull of *P. californicus*, the only species which equals or exceeds it in size, the braincase is very much smaller and lower and the rostrum very much longer. The total length of the skull is greater than in *californicus*, although *californicus* is much the larger animal.

*Measurements*.—Type specimen: total length, 222; tail vertebræ, 112; hind foot, 26. Average of 20 specimens from type locality: total length, 218; tail vertebræ, 111.6; hind foot, 26.2. *Cranial measurements*: total length, 31; basilar length of Hensel, 24; zygomatic breadth, 15; incisors to postpalatal notch, 13; length of nasals, 13.

*Remarks*.—Apparently *Peromyscus sitkensis* is related to *P. macrorhinus* (Rhoads), from Skeena River, which latter animal I have not seen. It differs from *P. macrorhinus* in uniformly larger size, 'redder' color, and much longer nasal bones.

**Zapus hudsonius alascensis** subsp. nov.

*Type* from Yakutat Bay, Alaska. No. 73584, ♂ ad. U. S. Nat. Mus., Biological Survey Coll. Collected July 5, 1895, by C. P. Streater. Original No. 4660.

*General characters*.—Similar externally to *Zapus hudsonius* from northern Minnesota, but slightly larger; rostrum and zygomata longer; mandible larger; molars heavier; crown of last lower molar longer.

*Color*.—Dorsal area well defined, grizzled dusky and yellowish; sides from nose to base of tail ochraceous, conspicuously lined with black hairs; ankle dusky posteriorly; tail sharply bicolor, grayish brown above, whitish beneath; fore and hind feet soiled whitish.

*Remarks*.—*Zapus alascensis* is much more closely related to *Z. hudsonius* of the northeastern United States and Canada than to *Z. trinotatus* of the Puget Sound region. It agrees with *hudsonius* and differs from *trinotatus* in the narrow braincase, small incisive foramina, and relatively small under jaw. The crown of the last lower molar is longer than in either *hudsonius* or *trinotatus*.

*Measurements*.—Type specimen: total length, 225; tail vertebræ, 139; hind foot, 32. Average of 4 specimens from type locality: total length, 217.5; tail vertebræ, 132; hind foot, 31.5.





Merriam, C. Hart. 1897. "Descriptions of five new rodents from the coast region of Alaska." *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington* 11, 221–223.

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