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A NEW SPECIES OF *HETEROGEOMYS*
(MAMMALIA : GEOMYIDAE) FROM HONDURUS

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In the course of biological investigations on the Caribbean slopes of northern Honduras in 1964-65, four adult or near adult specimens of pocket gophers which appear to represent an undescribed species of the genus *Heterogeomys* were taken near Tela, Province of Atlantida. For this population I propose the name

***Heterogeomys hondurensis* new species**

Holotype: Adult male, skin and skull, no. 12570, Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collections, collected 17 December 1964, by Jerome V. Mankins 8 miles west of Tela, Province of Atlantida, Honduras, elevation 10 feet; original no. 4772.

Diagnosis: A large, sparsely-haired *Heterogeomys*; pelage hispid, brown to near Seal brown in color above; underparts nearly naked; skull similar to that of *H. hispidus*, but premaxillae terminate posteriorly at or near the anterior point of juncture of the frontal with the maxillary arm of the zygoma (considerably anterior to a line drawn through the lacrimals; see Fig. 1); rostrum broad and short, its breadth 135-145 percent of interorbital breadth.

Measurements (mm): Holotype followed in parentheses by a male paratype (TCWC 12571): Total length, 333(336); tail, 99(98); hind foot, 47(46); condylobasal length, 62.6(64.3); zygomatic breadth, 42.5(43.2); nasals, 25.2(25.5); mastoidal breadth, 37.0(38.0); interorbital breadth, 12.2(11.7); alveolar length of maxillary toothrow, 14.0(14.2); weight (gm), 563.8(541.8).

Of two female paratypes (TCWC 12573 and 12572, respectively): Total length, 330, 330; tail 100, 99; hind foot, 47, 47; condylobasal length, 59.5, 61.4; zygomatic breadth, 38.9, 40.0; nasals, 23.7, 23.9; mastoidal breadth, 36.7, 37.2; interorbital breadth, 11.3, 12.0; alveolar length of maxillary toothrow, 14.0, 13.7; weight, 409, 404.6.

Comparisons: The Honduran specimens differ from all races of *H. hispidus* examined (*hispidus*, *torridus*, *yucatanensis*, *cayoensis* and

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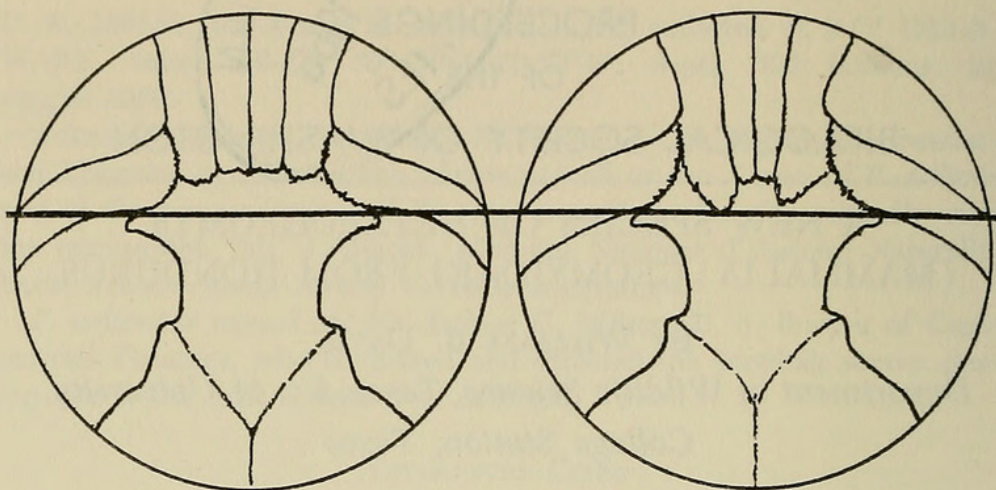


FIG. 1. Comparison of the dorsal aspect of the skulls of *Heterogeomys hondurensis* (left) and *H. hispidus* (right). Note the position of the premaxillae relative to a plane drawn through the lacrimals.

chiapensis) in the shortness of the posterior extension of the premaxillae (see Fig. 1). Additionally, *hondurensis* differs from *H. h. chiapensis* in attaining a larger size and in having a much coarser pelage and relatively longer tail; from *yucatanensis* in attaining a larger size; from *cayoensis*, from British Honduras, in having a harsher pelage and a proportionately longer tail.

Remarks: In the highland populations *chiapensis* and *cayoensis* the tail is relatively short (about 36% of length of head and body), whereas in the lowland populations, *yucatanensis* and *hondurensis*, it is relatively longer (44% of length of head and body). In specimens of *hispidus* (uplands) and *torridus* (lowlands) from Veracruz the same situation exists, but the percentages are different (34% in *hispidus*, 39% in *torridus*).

Upland populations also have softer, denser pelage and, in instances where comparative weights are available, heavier bodies. For example, weights of adult *hispidus* from near Jalapa, Veracruz, vary from 725 to 852 grams with no significant sexual difference; those of *torridus* from near the city of Vera Cruz vary from 448 to 548 with males significantly heavier than females. The four specimens from Honduras vary from 405 to 409 in adult females to 542 to 564 in adult males. All specimens from lowland areas have sparse, harsh pelage; in some instances so sparse that the animal appears to be nearly naked.

Additional material may demonstrate that *hondurensis* intergrades with *H. hispidus*; however, all available specimens of *hondurensis* are readily distinguished from the 23 specimens of *hispidus* examined by the cranial features depicted in Fig. 1.

This is the first reported occurrence of *Heterogeomys* in Honduras. According to Mankins, this pocket gopher is a serious pest in the oil palm plantations near Tela.

Comparative materials were made available by the Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan; the U. S. National Museum; and the American Museum of Natural History. To the individuals in charge of those collections I wish to express my appreciation for their assistance.

Specimens examined: Four, all from the type-locality.

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