

Note on *Sciurus mollipilosus* Audubon and Bachman.

In a recent note entitled 'The proper name of the Redwood Chickaree', published in these Proceedings (Vol. XVI, pp. 99, 100, June 25, 1903), Mr. Bangs objects to my identification of *Sciurus mollipilosus* Aud. and Bach. with his later described *Sciurus hudsonicus orarius*, which he now says "should be known as *Sciurus (Tamiasciurus) douglasi orarius* (Bangs)." His objection seems to be mainly that when the original authors of the name said: "This species was secured in Upper California, near the Pacific Ocean," and, "Our specimens were obtained in the northern part of California, near the Pacific Ocean," they did not really mean California at all but, "merely northwest coast of America, and is analogous to 'that part of California that adjoins Mexico' of the same authors." As to this 'analogous' expression, it originated with Bennett in 1833 (P. Z. S., 1833, p. 39), and, correctly quoted is: "that part of California which adjoins to Mexico," and is not in any sense Audubon and Bachman's. As "the northern part of California, near the Pacific Ocean" was at the time Audubon and Bachman wrote an unsettled wilderness belonging to Mexico, they could hardly have more definitely indicated the home of the Redwood Chickaree than by the phraseology they employed.

The coloration, as indicated by their figure, can be given little weight, when we recall the extravagant and unnatural tints that disfigure so large a part of their illustrations in the work to which reference is made, but the mention of white-tipped hairs in the tail, and lower parts "lightly tinged in some places with rufous" will apply very well to winter specimens I have seen of Mr. Bangs's *orarius*,—far better than to any other known form of the subgenus *Tamiasciurus*.

Mr. Bangs says that the only ground I gave "for using the name [*mollipilosus*] to supplant my [his] *S. orarius*" was the supposed origin of the specimens. As a matter of fact, the case seemed so clear to me that no argument or discussion of the matter appeared necessary. Nor is my opinion changed by Mr. Bangs's presentation of the case.

It will be noticed that Mr. Bangs now considers that *S. mollipilosus* belongs to the *hudsonicus* group and not to the *douglasii* group, and is of the opinion that it should be referred to either *S. h. vancouverensis* or *S. h. streatoris*, both from British Columbia. Baird, however, in 1857, said: "I have no doubt that the *Sciurus mollipilosus* of Audubon and Bachman is the same animal in the cinereous pelage ascribed to the above species [*S. douglasii*] * * * From the remark that the cinereous of the underparts is in some places lightly tinged with rufous, I infer that the specimen described of *S. mollipilosus* was in a transition state between the summer and winter pelage" (Mamm. N. Amer., 1857, p. 277).

Mr. Bangs is, therefore, the first to question the correctness of the alleged locality.—*J. A. Allen.*



Allen, J. A. 1903. "Note on *Sciurus mollipilosus* Audubon and Bachman." *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington* 16, 126–126.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/19609>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/94432>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

Sponsored by

Internet Archive

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: NOT_IN_COPYRIGHT

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.