[Thus far we have endeavoured to describe the forms and give the habits of the quadrupeds figured in our work; we will now append some descriptions, and a list of those species we have not been able to portray, but which deserve to be noticed, as belonging to the "Quadrupeds of North America," and necessary to complete the list.]

MEPHITIS ZORILLA.—G M E L.

CALIFORNIAN SKUNK.

(Not figured.)

M. Fronte macula ovali alba insignita; maculâ albâ ad tempus utrumque, strigis quatuor albis, interruptis in dorso et lateribus, caudæ apice albo.

CHARACTERS.

An oval spot of white on the forehead, and a large spot on each temple; four interrupted white stripes on the sides and back; tail broadly tipped with white.

SYNONYMES.

MEPHITIS ZORILLA.—Licht; Darstellung neue, oder wenig bekannter säugethiere, 1827-1834. Berlin, tafel xlvi., fig. 2.

LE ZORILLE.—Buffon, Hist. Nat., t. xiii., p. 302, table 41.

MEPHITIS BI-COLOR.—Gray, Loudon's Mag., vol. i., p. 581.

" ZORILLA.—Illiger.

DESCRIPTION.

In form, this species may be said to be a small image of the Common Skunk (*M. Chinga*).

Head, short in proportion; ears broad, rounded, clothed with hair on both surfaces; palms naked; nails short, grooved beneath, and slightly hooked; whiskers short and scattering; fur soft, like that of the domestic

cat, and composed of two kinds of hair, the under hairs being soft and woolly, the others longer, interspersed among them. On the tail the hair is very coarse, and, toward the extremity, rigid.

COLOUR.

There is a white patch on the forehead, and also between the eye and ear, extending beneath the ear to the middle of the body; another white stripe rises behind the ear, and runs parallel with the foregoing. These stripes are not quite uniform on each side; the body is spotted with white, forming three nearly uniform bars across the back. There are two white spots near the insertion of the tail, on the sides and rump. The white markings are set off by the colour of the remaining portions of the body, being blackish brown, very dark on the head and ears, a little lighter near the flanks.

Tail brownish black, tip (for about three inches) white.

DIMENSIONS.

	Inches.
From point of nose to root of tail, - - - - -	11½
Tail (vertebræ), - - - - -	6
“ (to end of hair), - - - - -	10
Shoulder to point of longest nail of fore-foot, - - - - -	5
Height of ear (posteriorly), - - - - -	$\frac{4}{10}$

HABITS.

The habits of the present animal are only partially known; it is said to retreat to holes in the earth, or live under roots of trees, in the crevices of rocks, &c. It feeds upon insects, birds, and the smaller quadrupeds.

This Skunk, as we are moreover informed, is able to make itself so offensive that few persons are disposed to approach or capture it, rather keeping aloof, as from the Common Skunk of our Atlantic states, so well known for its “perfume.”

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.

This species was found to be rather abundant, by J. W. AUDUBON and J. G. BELL, in California; it was also found in Texas by the former. DEPPE had discovered it previously in California, in 1820, or thereabouts.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The Zorilla was described by BUFFON (Hist. Nat., tom. xiii., p. 302) as

a species existing in South America ; his figure, however, bore considerable resemblance to an African species (*Viverra Striata* of SHAW). Subsequently Baron CUVIER bestowed great attention on this genus, and came to the conclusion that all the American Skunks were mere varieties of each other.

As far as the endless varieties of our Atlantic Species (*M. Chinga*) are concerned, he was correct ; but he was greatly in error in regarding the South American, Mexican, and Californian Skunks as being all of one species, for they differ greatly, not only in size, form, and internal organization, but also in colour.

Besides, many species of *Mephitis* present scarcely any variations in colour. The *Mephitis Chinga* seems to be like *Lepus callotis*, the Mexican hare, and *Lynx Rufus*, the bay lynx, a species that may be regarded as an exception rather than a type of the characteristic of the species.

CUVIER came to the conclusion, whilst pursuing his investigations, that BUFFON, in his Zorilla, had described the above named African species ; but it now appears that BUFFON was correct, that his specimen came from America, and that the species is found within our limits, on the western coast : therefore we restore his specific name of Zorilla (Le Zorille) as a synonyme.

Audubon, John James and Bachman, John. 1854. "Mephitis zorilla." *The quadrupeds of North America* 3, 276–278. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.322485>.

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