

SCALOPS ARGENTATUS.—AUD. and BACH.

SILVERY SHREW-MOLE.

PLATE CL. FIG. 4.—FEMALE.

S. Pilis tota longitudine albo, plumboque annulatis; fronte, mentique albido flavescente.

CHARACTERS.

Hairs, from the roots regularly annulated with white and plumbeous; forehead and chin, yellowish-white. Colour of the body, shining silver gray.

SYNONYME.

SCALOPS ARGENTATUS—SILVERY SHREW-MOLE. Aud. and Bach., Jour. Acad. Nat. Sci., October 5, 1841.

DESCRIPTION.

In form this species is cylindrical, like the common Shrew-Mole (*S. aquaticus*), to which it bears a strong resemblance. Muzzle, naked; and the nostrils inserted, not on the sides, as is the case in *Scalops Breweri*, but in the upper surface, near the point of the nose, as in *S. aquaticus*. Eyes, not visible, and appear covered by an integument; the lips are fringed with rather coarse hairs; this species is pendactylous, with naked palms and tail; the teeth are larger, shorter, and broader than those of the common Shrew-Mole; the fur is long and lustrous on the back, but much shorter and more compact on the under surface.

COLOUR.

Teeth, and nails, white; palms, hind-feet, and tail, flesh coloured; nose, forehead, lips, and chin, yellowish-white; the fur on the back is from the roots marked with alternate narrow bars of dark blue and white to near the extremities, where it is broadly barred with ashy white, and so slightly tipped with brown that the lighter colour beneath is still visible on the surface, giving it a beautiful silvery appearance, which presents a variety of changes, on being exposed to different rays of light. On the lower

surface the hair is plumbeous from the roots to near the tips, where it is barred with whitish; it is tipped with light brown. There is a spot of white on the centre of the abdomen, which is apparently accidental, as we have occasionally observed it in other species of this genus, as well as in the true mole (*Talpa*) of Europe.

DIMENSIONS.

	Inches.	Lines.
Length of head and body, - - - - -	7	1
" tail, - - - - -	1	
Breadth of palm, - - - - -		10
From tarsus to point of longest nail, - - - - -		7

HABITS.

Dr. GEO. C. LEIB, who discovered this animal in the prairies of Michigan, gave us no account of its habits, which we presume are similar to those of the common Shrew-Mole.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.

We have not heard of this beautifully furred Mole in any other locality than that where our specimen was procured, which is the only one we have ever seen, and the one from which our figure and description have been made.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Of the several species of Shrew-Mole that inhabit North America, this in point of colour is the most brilliant that has yet been brought to the notice of naturalists. Although it bears a general resemblance to the common Shrew-Mole, yet the characters it presents have induced us after some hesitation and doubt, to designate it as a new species. It is nearly double the size of the common Shrew-Mole; the fur is much longer and softer, and differs strikingly in colour and lustre. Our specimen was evidently a young animal, although the dentition was similar to that of *Sc. aquaticus*. Some of the small thread-like teeth that are placed behind the incisors in the upper jaw were wanting on one side, and were only barely visible on the other. The young of *Scalops aquaticus* have but thirty teeth until they are more than a year old; when they have arrived at their full vigour they are furnished permanently with thirty-six. The skulls of *Scalops Townsendii* and *S. Brewerii* each contain forty-four teeth.

Before we take leave of the Shrew-Moles of our country, we have to add that RICHARDSON (F. B. A. p. 12), in noticing the assertion of BARTRAM, that a true mole, *Talpa*, existed in America (in which he was supposed by later writers to be mistaken), asserts that there are several true moles in the museum of the Zoological Society of London, which were brought from America, and which differ from the ordinary European species (*Talpa Europea*), in being of a smaller size and having a shorter and thicker snout, their fur being brownish-black. DEKAY, in the Natural History of New York (p. 16), refers to the above statement. We however examined these specimens in the Zoological Museum, and found they consisted of only two species—our common *Scalops aquaticus*, which RICHARDSON strangely mistook for another species, and *Scalops Breweri*, to which he particularly referred. Thus far therefore no true specimen of the genus *Talpa* has been discovered in America, and we have no doubt that the species referred to by BARTRAM as the black mole was BREWER'S Shrew-Mole, which in certain lights appears quite black.



Fig. 2

Fig. 1

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

On Stones by W^m B. Hitchcock

Fig. 1 Southern Pouched Rat. Fig. 2 DeKay's Shrew. Fig. 3 Long-Nosed Shrew. Fig. 4 Silvery Shrew-Mole.

Drawn from Nature by J. W. Audubon.

Lith. Printed & Col^d by J. T. Bowen, Phil



Audubon, John James and Bachman, John. 1854. "Scalops argentatus, Silvery Shrew-Mole [Pl. CL, female]." *The quadrupeds of North America* 3, 252–254.
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