

TADARIDA RAFINESQUE VERSUS NYCTINOMUS GEOFFROY.

In 1814, on page 55 of *Précis des Découvertes somiologiques ou zoologiques et botaniques*, Rafinesque wrote: "Je viens de m'apercevoir que Mr. Geoffroy St. Hilaire a établi en 1810, le G. [enre] *Cephalotes* avec le *Pteropus pal[il]asii* et une autre espèce *C. peronii*; mais nos caractères diffèrent en ce que dans mon *C. teniotis* [see page 12 of the *Précis*] il n'y a aucune [sic] incisive inférieure: [a gross misstatement of fact] s'il compose un G. [enre] particulier, il faudra le nommer TADARIDA TENIOTIS." So far as I have been able to find this use of *Tadarida* is the earliest name that has been applied to the bats long known as *Nyctinomus*.

Nyctinomus is usually considered to have been first published by E. Geoffroy in the second volume of the natural history of the *Description de l'Égypte*, pages 114 and 128, the only species mentioned being *Nyctinomus aegyptiacus*. The date on the title page of this volume is 1812. Sherborn (*Proc. Zool. Soc. London*, 1897, pp. 285-288) concludes that the volume did not appear until 1818, four years later than Rafinesque's little work. Sherborn advances his opinion with excellent arguments which seem beyond refutation. Among other interesting things he shows that Gray had received a set of proofs of Geoffroy's paper presumably later than March, 1813. Geoffroy probably sent proofs to other zoologists of his time. At any rate in 1816, Oken (*Lehrbuch Naturgesch.*, pt. 3, vol. 2, p. 924) uses *Nyctinomus* in the same sense as did Geoffroy, as well as the genera *Plecotus*, *Stenoderma*, *Rhinopoma*, *Taphozous* and *Myopterus*, names usually accredited to Geoffroy in 1818, but which should stand on the authority of Oken, 1816.

That Geoffroy's names were not published before 1816 or 1817, seems to be made certain by an examination of pages 125 to 130 of volume 1 of Cuvier's *Règne Animal*, 1817 (actually appearing late in the previous year). Five of Geoffroy's six new genera of bats in the *Description de l'Égypte* are mentioned there: Les Nyctinomes. (Geoff.) p. 125; Les Sténodermes. (Geoff.) p. 125; Les Rhynopomes. (Geoff.) p. 128; Les Taphiens. (*Thaphozous*, Geoff.); Les Oreillards. (*Plecotus*, Geoff.). The last two are the only ones in which the generic names occur in Latin form. Plate references in the *Description de l'Égypte* are given by Cuvier. On those plates the names appear as French words only. No page or volume numbers of the "Description" are given, but with respect to most of the names that were in use before the appearance of the *Règne Animal* Cuvier gives volume and page references. The inference is that the plates of the mammals of the *Description de l'Égypte* were in existence before the text.

Unless the above conclusions can be shown to be founded in error the bats currently called *Nyctinomus* should in the future be designated by Rafinesque's name *Tadarida*.

Blainville (*Compt. Rend. Acad. Sci. Paris*, vol. 5, p. 821, 1837), and Gray (*Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.* ser. 3, vol. 17, p. 93, 1866) used *Tadarida* in

the same sense as did Rafinesque. Gervais in 1855 (in Castelnau Expéd. Amér. Sud. Mamm. p. 60) refers to *Tadarida* as one of Rafinesque's genera, but without mention of place or date of publication.

The type of *Nyctinomus* Oken, 1816, Geoffroy, 1818, is *aegyptiacus*, a species with four lower incisors; the type of *Tadarida* Rafinesque is *teniotis*, a species with six lower incisors. Recent workers (Miller, Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus. No. 57, p. 251, 1907) do not consider these differences of generic value.

—M. W. Lyon, Jr.

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INTERESTING MAMMALS ON THE PRIBILOF ISLANDS.

On February 14, 1914, a polar bear was seen and shot at by an Aleut at Zapadni Rookery, St. George Island. The tracks were seen on shore in the snow by the writer and others. This animal was formerly an abundant inhabitant of the northern part of Bering Sea, but rarely came south of St. Matthew Island. If native reports are to be believed, it has been seen on St. Paul Island on at least three different occasions, but this was many years ago. From the same source of information comes the only previous record of the animal on St. George. This was about 1820, when a bear came ashore from the ice pack at the village and went westward to a small pond where it spent some time on the ice. Thereafter this has been known as Bear Lake. The numerous tracks along the beach in the snow show that the bear seen at Zapadni had been ashore also. During the winter no drift ice had been sighted from the island. But this could not have been seen unless it had come within ten miles. Hair seals had been common about the beaches but in no unusual numbers.

During the month of March, 1914, walrus were sighted three different times swimming along just off shore. They were at no very remote time abundant on St. George as the skulls may yet be seen about the beaches. Five dead ones floated in at Garden Cove about 1907.

A sperm whale or cachelot came ashore at Zapadni Rookery April 14, 1914. It was a male 47 feet long and had probably been dead a week. About five tons of the blubber were saved for fox food when the head and carcass floated away. Although other species of whales are abundant about the island, the cachelot had never been seen before by any of the Aleuts.

—G. Dallas Hanna.



Lyon, Marcus Ward. 1914. "Tadarida Rafinesque versus Nyctinomus Geoffroy." *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington* 27, 217–218.

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