

29. *Ornismya longirostris*, d'Orb. & Lafr. Syn. Av. ii. p. 29.

Guarayos (O.).

No specimen in Paris Museum (Elliot, *l. c.*).

30. *Noctua ferox*, d'Orb. & Lafr. Syn. Av. i. p. 8; d'Orb. Voy. Ois. p. 127.

Prov. Chiquitos (O.).

31. *Ibycter gymnocephalus*, d'Orb. & Lafr. Syn. Av. i. p. 2; d'Orb. Voy. Ois. p. 50.

Cochabamba (O.).

### 3. On the *Acanthomys leucopus* of Gray.

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In the first part of Prof. Schlegel's new periodical, 'Notes from the Royal Zoological Museum of the Netherlands at Leyden,' Dr. F. A. Jentink identifies two specimens of a spiny Rat from Celebes with the North-Australian species described by the late Dr. Gray under the name of *Acanthomys leucopus*<sup>1</sup>. The specific identity of a *Mus* from Celebes with one from the continent of Australia seemed so unlikely that I suspected that Dr. Jentink might have been misled by Gray's very insufficient description; and I was consequently induced to reexamine the types in the British Museum. A comparison of the description given below with that of Dr. Jentink will show that the two species are evidently quite distinct, the Celebes animal being a fourth smaller than the Australian, with much smaller feet, and having the tail longer than the head and body, thinly haired and tufted, instead of shorter and naked.

In a note to my report on the Rev. G. Brown's collection, I remarked that Gray's species belonged to the restricted genus *Mus* and not to *Acanthomys*, Lesson (= *Acomys*, Geoffroy), and that it would require to be renamed, the specific name being preoccupied by the common North-American White-footed Mouse, the *Mus leucopus* (Rafinesque) of Desmarest and other writers, *Hesperomys leucopus* of more recent zoologists<sup>2</sup>. Dr. Jentink also places the Australian species in the genus *Mus*, but on different grounds; he rejects the genus *Acomys* or *Acanthomys* altogether, as being founded merely on the superficial character of the possession of spinous hairs. But that group was founded by the older Geoffroy on the *Mus cahirinus* of Desmarest; and it has been restricted by subsequent writers to the small group of Ethiopian *Mures* in which a spiny coat is combined with marked cranial peculiarities, notably with shallow pterygoid fossæ, very small incisive foramina and slightly developed coronoid processes<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> P. Z. S. 1867, p. 598.

<sup>2</sup> P. Z. S. 1877, p. 124, footnote.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Peters, Reise n. Mozambique, i. p. 161; Alston, P. Z. S. 1876, p. 83.



Although Dr. Jentink places the species in the genus *Mus*, he retains Gray's specific name on the ground that *Mus leucopus* (Raf.) has since been separated as a *Hesperomys*. In this I cannot agree; because a species has been removed to a new genus its name does not become unoccupied in the old one. Surely Dr. Jentink would not think it admissible to name a new Mouse *Mus aquaticus* because the Linnæan *Mus aquaticus* has been separated as an *Arvicola*? Nor can I see any analogy in his further suggestion that "if Alston objects to the name of this species he should also reject the name *Uromys rufescens*, and adopt the specific name *muscivora*, Pierson Ramsay, because, under the name of *Mus rufescens*, a Mouse was already described by Gray." The cases will only be parallel when Dr. Jentink can prove that my *Uromys rufescens*<sup>1</sup> is a true *Mus*, and does not belong to the perfectly distinct genus *Uromys*. When he has shown this I will readily withdraw my name in favour of Mr. Ramsay's.

The following is a fuller description than Gray's of the North-Australian Spiny Rat, which I propose to call

*MUS TERRÆ-REGINÆ*, sp. n.

*Acanthomys leucopus*, Gray, P. Z. S. 1867, p. 598 (descr. orig., vide suprâ).

*Mus leucopus*, Jentink, Notes fr. Leyden Mus. i. p. 8 (part., nec Desmarest).

Fur stiff and harsh both above and below, most of the hairs being developed into flattened channelled spines; on the back are many longer cylindrical hairs. Whiskers weak, not longer than the head, mixed black and white. Ears rather large, rounded, perfectly naked. Feet remarkably large and stout. Tail considerably shorter than the head and body, naked, the scattered minute hairs being hardly visible to the naked eye. Colour above dark reddish brown<sup>2</sup>, the spiny hairs being dusky, tipped with rufous, the longer hairs black; lips, lower parts of cheeks, chin, breast, belly, inside of limbs, and feet yellowish white<sup>3</sup>; tail dusky, irregularly marked with yellowish patches and rings.

Measurements of type specimens (*a*, an adult, and *b*, a young female):—

	<i>a.</i>	
	in.	millims.
Length of head and body . . . .	8.25	= 210
„ tail . . . . .	7.10	= 180
„ ear . . . . .	.75	= 20
„ hind foot . . . . .	1.57	= 40

<sup>1</sup> P. Z. S. 1877, p. 124, pl. xviii.

<sup>2</sup> Not greyish brown as stated by Gray.

<sup>3</sup> The yellowish tinge may be due to the spirit in which the specimens are preserved.







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