

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
NEW ENGLAND ZOÖLOGICAL CLUB

AN EXTINCT CUBAN CAPROMYS.

BY GLOVER MORRILL ALLEN.

IN a previous paper (Bull. Mus. Comp. Zoöl., Jan. 1917, vol. 61, pp. 1-12), I described a subfossil insectivore, a *Geocapromys*, and a small species of *Boromys*, on the basis of cranial fragments recovered from a piece of bone-breccia sent from Cuba to the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy by Professor Carlos de la Torre. The bone-breccia was found in a limestone cavern in the Sierra de Hato Nuevo, Province of Matanzas. This locality has lately been revisited by Dr. Thomas Barbour, who collected a quantity of subfossil bones from the same cave. He found them in a layer a short distance beneath the surface of the floor deposit, and was fortunate in discovering several pockets where the bones were loose in the earth, and not solidified together by limy deposition. The greater part of the deposit had already been removed in the course of years by the local planters, who use the cave earth as a fertilizer. The original mass must have been considerable, the accumulation of a long period of time. The greater part of the bones recovered are those of *Geocapromys* and *Capromys pre-*

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hensilis, mainly immature. Their scattered and fragmentary condition may be explained in part by the probability that the animals from which they came were brought thither by owls, and either they were torn apart in the cave or their bones were regurgitated as owl 'pellets.'

In examining the material brought back from this cave and from the Macha cave, near Limones, several jaws of a very small *Capromys* were discovered, apparently representing an undescribed species which in life could hardly have been much larger than an adult house rat. Even the youngest *Capromys prehensilis* available, in which the last lower molar has just reached the tooth-row, has much larger and broader teeth, and a longer tooth-row, than the old adult of this small species. A young or immature jaw of this genus is easily recognized by the nature of the bony capsule surrounding the last molar; it is thin and porous in texture, and its outline is rounded. In an adult, however, the bony alveolar wall is solid, its posterior edge thickened to form a narrow ledge, and produced backward as a vertical keel. This dwarf species may be known as

***Capromys nana*, sp. nov.**

Type.—A right lower mandible, no. 9864, Mus. Comp. Zoöl., from a cave deposit in the Sierra de Hato Nuevo, Province of Matanzas, Cuba, collected by Thomas Barbour.

Specific characters.—A small species with a tooth-row about two thirds the length of that in the adult *C. prehensilis*, and with proportionally narrower teeth; angular process of the jaw, however, relatively shorter and broader.

Description.—The type jaw retains all the teeth, but the coronoid and angular processes are broken off. The strikingly narrower and smaller teeth, as compared with *C. prehensilis*, the smallest of the living species, and the less massive proportions of the jaw, are characteristic, and are well brought out in the measurements given below. The enamel pattern of the teeth is essentially similar, except that the anterior point of the first molariform tooth is nearly in the axis of the tooth-row instead of nearer its inner border. The shape of the angular process is characteristic.

It is relatively much broader and flatter in ventral aspect than in *C. prehensilis* or in *melanurus*, with a deep, rounded notch on its inner outline, instead of being long and narrow with only a slight indication of a notch. In lateral aspect the broad ledge formed by the angular process is wider anteriorly, and bounds a deep pocket-like depression, where in other species of *Capromys* the surface shows only a shallow and evenly hollowed groove for muscle attachment. The incisors are pure white.

Measurements.—The type measures: alveolar length of tooth-row, 12.5 mm.; crowns of cheek teeth, 12.2; crown length and breadth of pm_4 , 3.6×2.6 ; of m_1 , 3.0×3.0 ; of m_2 , 2.7×3.2 ; of m_3 , 2.9×2.9 ; diastema, 10.5; greatest depth from alveolus of pm_4 , 9.0; from back of condyle to anterior end of socket of incisor, 35.5; from summit of condyle to ventral surface of angular process, 17.0. The lower tooth-row of an adult *C. prehensilis* measures 17.5 mm., and the breadth of the crowns of the molars, 4.3.

A fragment of a maxilla referred to this species (no. 9875) shows the alveoli of the three anterior teeth. These alveoli measure respectively: pm^4 , 3.6×3.0 ; pm^1 , 3.0×3.0 ; m^2 , 3.0×2.9 mm.

Remarks.—The ten jaws examined are all quite similar, and agree closely in the small size of the teeth, the relative lightness of structure, and the possession of a deeper depression in the outer face of the jaw, where the angular process comes off. There can be no doubt that they represent adults of a much smaller species than any heretofore known.

It should be recalled here, that Peters, in publishing Poey's description of *Capromys melanurus* (Monatsb. K. Preuss. Akad. Berlin, 1864, p. 384) added in a footnote: "Hr. Poey schreibt mir noch von einer zweiten neuen Art, *C. pallidus*, welche sich von allen anderen durch ihre geringere Grösse und die blonden, ungeringelten Haare unterscheidet." This probably refers to an albinistic form of either *melanurus* or *prehensilis*, such as occurs not uncommonly with yellowish "ungeringelten" hair. Such individuals, as Mr. C. T. Ramsden of Guantanamo tells me, are believed to live in gray-barked trees. The lesser size ("geringere Grösse") is not further specified, and may have been due to youth. At all events, the name *C. pallidus*, based on hearsay report, cannot be satisfactorily identified, much less applied to the small subfossil species here described. The latter may not have become

extinct until after the discovery of America; but at all events the bones studied are well mineralized and seemingly much older in appearance than those of the introduced house rats, a few of which are present in the material brought back. Had this *Capromys* survived until Poey's day, it is unlikely that Gundlach would have failed to discover it.

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NEW SPHINGIDAE

BY BENJAMIN PRESTON CLARK

It is a pleasure, after the lapse of a year, to describe further species and subspecies of Sphingidae which I believe to be new. A number of these have been found in examining carefully all the American collections of this family. Five new forms from South America, and three from Mexico, give promise of a further enlargement of the known Sphingid fauna of these countries. Of the remainder three are from Africa, one from the Philippines, and one from North America north of Mexico.

Two corrections I desire to make in my paper¹ of Dec. 5, 1916. *Amplipterus gannascus dentoni* should be known as *Amplipterus dentoni*, for, as Dr. Karl Jordan kindly called to my attention, *Amplipterus gannascus* occurs in Peru, and two subspecies of the same species cannot be residents in the same locality. The habitat of *Protoparce afflicta bahamensis* should have been stated as Andros Island. My friend Dr. W. M. Mann visited Andros in June, 1917, and collected in the same locality where Mr. Engelhardt took the type; he failed, however, to find further specimens, and it must be a rare moth.

¹ Proc. N. E. Z. C., VI, 39-50.

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