

A NOTE ON *PHALANGER ATRIMACULATUS* TATE

(*Mammalia, Marsupialia*)

by

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This species was described by TATE (Am. Mus. Nov. 1283, p. 4, 1945) from Bernhard Camp, Idenburg River, 100 miles southwest of Hollandia, New Guinea. In addition to the type (an old male), a second male from Keku, south of Madang and 500 miles east from the type locality, was available to that author. No female of the new species has been secured by the ARCHBOLD collectors and was, consequently, up till now, unknown to science. Just before the war I received a curious phalanger, collected at Pionierbivak, Mamberamo River, New Guinea, by Mr J. P. K. VAN EECHOUD. Without doubt this specimen represents the female of *Phalanger atrimaculatus*. At the same collecting station Mr VAN EECHOUD also collected a specimen of *Phalanger maculatus maculatus* (GEOFFROY). There is no reason to accept the supposition of Mr TATE (l.c.) that there might be ecological difference between *maculatus* and *atrimaculatus*, but even if there should be I would not doubt the specific status of *atrimaculatus*. The specimen *in casu* may be described here.

DESCRIPTION

Skin. Fore limbs, top of head, shoulders, anterior half of back, base of tail and oral half of hairy tail a dark, fiery, rusty red, somewhat near Hay's Russet (cf. RIDGWAY). Dorsal part of hind feet, ventral part of hind limbs and caudal half of hairy tail a trifle darker. Chin, cheeks, throat, breast and anterior part of belly dull golden brown, somewhat near Honey Yellow (cf. RIDGWAY), slightly darkening in caudal direction. Caudal half of back, proximal half of upper side of limbs, caudal half of flanks jet-black, without any other tinge. Black region extending to caudal part of belly, but divided by a broad zone of russet, changing between Hay's Russet and Tawny.

Skull. Large, heavily ossified, frontal region with strongly pronounced inflation. p^3 present. External pterygoid wings narrowed. Other characters of skull mentioned by the original author not well pronounced. The skull is in stage 5 (vide TATE l. c. p. 2).

Measurements. No measurements taken in flesh. Skull: condylobasal length from oral border of *foramen magnum*: 103.7; zygomatic breadth:

68.3; median length of *palatum durum*: 41.5; mastoid width: 56.4; outer width across p^4 : 36.1; toothrow, length $c - m^4$: 55.0; $p^4 - m^4$: 35.8; p^4 : 7.0 by 5.7; m^4 : 7.6 by 5.8; mandible, front of incisive alveolus to *processus articularis*: 86.8.

Allotype: ♀, skin and skull, North New Guinea, Pionierbivak, Mamberamo River, 175 km NW from type locality, + 30 m, leg. J. P. K. VAN EECHOUDE, between July and November 1939, Buitenzorg Museum Cat. Nr 3761, Coll. Nr 404/'40.

DISTRIBUTION.

North New Guinea. Only known from Mamberamo and Idenburg Rivers and from Keku. There is no reason to include Misool Island and Ceram in the range of *atrimaculatus* on behalf of JENTINK's description (Notes Leyden Mus. 7, p. 115-116, 1885) as is done by TATE (l.c. p. 21). The description of JENTINK in my opinion refers to the race of *maculatus* found on these islands, as becomes clear by comparing the material at my disposal with JENTINK's notes. I have not seen any material from Waigeu, so the occurrence on this island remains open to discussion.