A NEW KANGAROO RAT OF THE DIPOMODYS ORDII GROUP FROM THE BIG BEND REGION OF TEXAS

By Monroe D. Bryant

Critical examination of specimens of Dipodomys ordii from the Big Bend Region of Texas has brought to light the existence there of an hitherto unnamed race. The newly named race resembles Dipodomys ordii ordii in general color and size but differs in details of color and cranial features. The new form may be known as:

Dipodomys ordii attenuatus, new subspecies

Type.—Adult male, skin with skull; no. 80429, Mus. Vert. Zool.; mouth of Santa Helena Canyon, 2146 feet, Big Bend of the Rio Grande River, Brewster County, Texas; November 19, 1936; collected by Adrey E. Borell; original no. 5581.

Range.—Known only from two localities in Brewster County, Texas.

Diagnosis.—Size: About as in Dipodomys ordii ordii. Color: Upper surface between Pinkish Buff and Pinkish Cinnamon, lightly mixed with blackish; sides pure Pinkish Buff (Capitalized color terms according to Ridgway, Color Standards and Color Nomenclature, Washington, D.C., 1912); under surface, spot on each side of nose, spot above and behind eye, postauricular patch, stripe on rump, and feet white; ears narrowly margined with white; upper and lower tail stripes blackish, mixed with white on the proximal half; lateral tail stripes white, extending slightly onto the pencil beyond end of vertebrae; distal part of tail slightly crested and penicillate. Skull: Triangular; rostrum narrow; frontal processes of premaxillae narrow, extending slightly behind nasals; nasals slender and truncate posteriorly; mastoid region greatly inflated; interparietal small and triangular in shape with the length always greater than the width; auditory bullae small, long in comparison with depth.

3 Contribution from the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.
Measurements.—Mus. Vert. Zool. numbers 80429, 80430, 80431, and Mus. Zool., Univ. of Michigan number, 79121, all adult males, measure respectively as follows: Total length, 243, 240, 228, 245; tail vertebrae, 137, 134, 127, 143; hind foot, 37, 36, 37, 37; ear from notch dry, 11.5, 11.5, 11.5, 11.2; greatest length of skull, 36.5, 36.5, 35.5, 35.5; condylobasal length, 27.1, 27.2, 26.4, 27.8; spread of maxillary arches, 19.3, 19.0, 18.8, 19.1; greatest length of nasals, 14.1, 13.0, 13.1, 12.8; frontonasal length, 22.9, 21.8, 21.6, 21.8; greatest width of rostrum at anterior end, 3.3, 3.4, 3.8, 3.6; breadth of skull across bullae, 23.1, 23.4, 23.0, 22.2; greatest length of tympanic bulla, 9.1, 9.5, 8.9, 8.9; width of palate and anterior upper molars, 6.1, 6.3, 6.2, 6.3.

Comparisons.—Compared with topotypes of D. o. ordii, D. o. attenuatus differs as follows: Color of upper surface and sides paler, more buffy and less golden; upper and lower tail stripes with more white hairs; skull smaller in all measurements taken except greatest length of nasals and frontonasal length; rostrum weaker; spread of maxillary arches relatively smaller which, combined with the weaker rostrum, gives the skull an acutely pointed and triangular appearance; auditory bullae smaller and less inflated ventrally; mastoidal region less inflated posteriorly; basioccipital narrower; interparietal smaller. D. o. attenuatus differs from D. o. richardsoni, as known by specimens from 1/2 mile west of Canadian, Hemphill County, Texas, in the above mentioned features even more than from D. o. ordii, as richardsoni is the largest and brightest colored form of the three. D. o. attenuatus differs from D. senetti, as known by specimens from Cameron County, Texas, in the following selected features: Hair on the dorsal surface longer and softer; rostrum weaker; breadth of the skull across bullae greater in comparison with the spread of the maxillary arches, this giving the skull a more triangular appearance when viewed from the dorsal surface; dorsal outline of skull more arched; interparietal smaller and triangular in shape rather than rectangular; palatal region narrower; auditory bullae larger and more oval.

Acknowledgements.—For the opportunity to study and describe this new kangaroo rat, I am grateful to Mr. Adrey E. Borell, now Regional Biologist of the United States Soil Conservation Service, but formerly with the United States National Park Service. I am grateful also to Dr. W. Frank Blair of the University of Michigan for the use of two specimens of attenuatus which he had recognized as belonging to an unnamed race that he, himself, had intended to describe. Also to Dr. J. Eric Hill of the American Museum of Natural History I am obliged for the opportunity to make direct comparison with the type specimen and another specimen on which Allen based the name Dipodomys senetti.

Specimens examined.—Total number: Five, all from Brewster County, Texas: Mouth of Santa Helena (Elena on some maps) Canyon, 2146 feet, 2; Johnson's Ranch, 2000 feet, 3.

Transmitted May 9, 1939.