

*Otomys irroratus tropicalis*, subsp. n.

The northern strong-coloured form of *O. irroratus*, with seven laminae to the last upper molar.

Size slightly larger than in *O. irroratus*. General colour deep brown, nearest to "vandyke-brown" of Ridgway, very different therefore to the grizzled grey of true South-African *irroratus*. In each case the colour varies considerably, but the general tone seems always darker in the northern animal. Sides clearer brown. Belly slaty, with the tips of the hairs buffy; in *irroratus* they are comparatively clear grey. Sides of muzzle dark fulvous. Eyes without lighter rings. Ears of medium length, well-haired, rather paler than the head. Upper surface of hands and feet dark brown, the digits darker than the metapodials. Tail less than half the length of the head and body, well-haired, broadly black above, dull whitish below.

Skull apparently much as in true *irroratus*, but the nasals, though very variable, tend to be more broadly expanded anteriorly, and the interorbital space is commonly narrower. Teeth as in *irroratus*, but the last upper molar with seven laminae.

Dimensions of the type (measured in the flesh):—

Head and body 195 millim.; tail 93; hind foot (s. u.) 30; ear 23.

Skull: greatest length 43·5; basilar length 35; zygomatic breadth 21·7; nasals 18 × 7·5; interorbital breadth 3·3; palate length 19·5; palatal foramina 8·2; length of upper molar series (crowns) 8·5; length of bulla 7·2.

*Hab.* Eastern Tropical Africa, from British East Africa to Nyasaland. Typical locality, western slope of Mt. Kenya, British East Africa. Altitude 10,000 feet.

*Type.* Old male. B.M. no. O. 2. 1. 20. Collected 22nd August, 1899, by Mr. H. J. Mackinder.

The difference in general colour and in the number of molar laminae between northern and southern specimens of this group has long been known, and it is quite time that a name should be applied to the former. Examples from Mashonaland vary in the number of the laminae, and for this reason I do not at present distinguish the East-African form as a species, but only as a subspecies. The Mashona skins are distinctly southern so far as colour is concerned, while Nyasa ones are clearly northern.