

4. *SACCOSTOMUS LAPIDARIUS*. (Plate XIV. fig. 2.)

Saccostomus lapidarius, Peters, Reise n. Mossamb., Säug. p. 167 (1852).

Three specimens. Exact localities and dates not preserved.

This rare species has hitherto been recorded only from Mozambique, where Prof. Peters collected his types.

5. *MUS (ISOMYS) PUMILIO*, Sparrm. K. Vet.-Ak. Handl. 1784, p. 236.

Two specimens. *a*, ♀, Table Mountain, November 30; and *b*, ♂, "between Aamhouf and Hountop," Great Namaqualand, June 8, 1862.

6. *MUS (LEGGADA) MINUTOIDES*, Smith, S. Afr. Quart. Journ. ii. p. 157 (1834).

One specimen. Damaraland.

7. *MUS SILACEUS*, Wagn. Arch. f. Naturg. 1842, i. p. 11.

Four specimens. *a* & *b*, Otjimbique, August 19 and 27, 1866; *c* & *d*, no exact localities.

8. *MUS NIGRICAUDA*, sp. n.

One specimen. ♂, Hountop R., Great Namaqualand, June 1, 1862.

For description see below.

9. *MUS COUCHA*, Sm. App. Rep. Exp. p. 43 (1836).

One specimen. Elephant's Vley, October 30, 1859.

10. *MUS*, sp.

One specimen. No exact locality.

There is thus one new species, No. 8, in the collection: and No. 10 might also turn out to be new; but it is represented by such a very indifferent specimen that I cannot determine this point with certainty.

The following is a description of No. 8, a very well-marked species, quite distinct from any other African Rat.

MUS NIGRICAUDA, sp. n. (Plate XIV. fig. 1.)

Fur rather long and coarse, composed of but one kind of hair, there being no under-fur. Centre of back mixed yellow and black, the greater part of the hairs having yellow distal halves, while others are wholly black. Sides of the head and body mixed white and black, the separation from the upper yellowish colour fairly well marked. Belly-hairs pure white to their bases. Ears rather large, thinly covered with short greyish hairs. Feet white above, the hairs longer at the ends of the toes, so as to conceal the claws. Tail slightly shorter than the head and body, nearly naked at its base, but thickly covered for its distal half both above and below with rather long shining black hairs, which form more or less of a pencil at the tip. Hind feet proportionally short, the six pads large and

rounded, occupying nearly the whole of the fore part of the sole. First hind toe reaching just to the base of the second; fifth to the end of the metacarpal of the fourth.

Molars much as in the subgenus *Isomys*, broad and rounded, with numerous small but well-marked cusps.

Approximate dimensions, in inches:—

Head and body.	Tail.	Hind foot.	Forearm and hand.	Ear-conch.	Skull.	Incisors to 1st upper molars.	Molar series.
6·2	5·8	1·01	1·18	0·65	—	·38	·21

Judging from the analogy of other species, I should imagine that *Mus nigricauda* is an arboreal animal; for in nearly all climbing Rodents we find the rather short feet, large rounded foot-pads, and more or less bushy tail characteristic of the present species. The Dormice, Squirrels, and, most closely analogous of all, the Climbing Vesper-mice of Tropical America (*Rhipidomys*), may be cited as examples of forms which possess the above mentioned accompaniments of an arboreal habit of life.

4. Description of the Pterylosis of *Mesites*, with Remarks on the Position of that Genus. By W. A. FORBES, B.A., Prosector to the Society.

[Received February 7, 1882.]

When making some observations on the pterylographical and other peculiarities of *Eupetes macrocerus*¹, I expressed regret at not having been able to obtain any specimen of *Mesites*, which in external appearance somewhat approaches *Eupetes macrocerus*, to study its pterylosis also.

Since then, having obtained through Herr G. Schneider, of Basel, a skin of *Mesites variegatus*, I have been able, from an examination of it, to complete our knowledge of this most peculiar form as regards the distribution of its feathers. All that was previously known of this part of the structure of *Mesites* was the existence in that bird of five pairs of powder-down patches², M. A. Milne-Edwards in his paper on it³ having confined his observations to its osseous and internal structure⁴. Those interested in the various opinions which have been held by naturalists as to the exact systematic position of *Mesites*, I will refer to M. Milne-Edwards's paper just quoted, only adding Mr. E. Bartlett's suggestion "that the

¹ P. Z. S. 1881, p. 838.

² Vide E. Bartlett, P. Z. S. 1877, p. 292.

³ Ann. Sci. Nat. (6) Zool. vii. 1878, art. 6.

⁴ An imperfect skull, extracted from the present skin, shows that the palate is schizognathous, the recurved maxillo-palatines being free in the middle line, and the vomer small and pointed—points not evident in Milne-Edwards's figure, his specimen, I believe, being somewhat imperfect.