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A NEW SPECIES OF RICE RAT (*ORYZOMYS*) FROM THE COAST OF PERU

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SUMARIO

UNA NUEVA ESPECIE DE ORYZOMYS DE LA COSTA DEL PERU, por COLIN CAMPBELL SANBORN. — Estudiando una pequeña colección de roedores provenientes de las lomas de Atocongo y de las lomas vecinas, cerca de Lima, incluyendo un zorro (*Dusicyon sechurae?*) y diversas especies de *Marmosa, Phyllotis* y *Oryzomys*, el autor ha encontrado una nueva especie de "ratón del arroz", *Oryzomys zunigae*, vecina de *O. (Melanomys) caliginosus phaeopus*, que pasa a describir.

Señor Enrique Zúñiga of the Museo de Historia Natural "Javier Prado", Lima, in 1942 began a survey of the lomas of the Peruvian coast. The lomas are those areas of the coast that receive enough moisture in winter and spring from the fogs to produce a carpet of green vegetation that dries up in summer. Weberbauer (1936) states that lomas extend from Arica to the Rio de Lomas and from Cañete to Pativilca. Between these areas and

north of Pativilca to Trujillo loma vegetation is found in a few scattered localities only.

Sr. Zúñiga collected at Atocongo, Vizcacheras, Mangomarca, and San Jerónimo from 7 August to 22 October, the season of the coastal fogs. He (Zúñiga 1942) found abundant vegetation at Atocongo but only scattered patches of green on the other lomas. He also states "Besides, Atocongo has small springs of water that probably last all the year while this provision of water does not exist at the other lomas visited."

Mammals were most plentiful at Atocongo, 44 being taken in 325 trapping nights between August 7 and 29. The catch at other lomas was much less but in all 71 rodents were taken. The mammals recorded included a fox (*Dusycyon sechurae?*), and specimens of *Marmosa. Phyllotis, Oryzomys* and an unidentified rodent.

A series of this rodent were sent by Dr. Jehan Vellard, Director of the Museo de Historia Natural "Javier Prado" to the Chicago Natural History Museum for identification. They proved to represent a new species belonging to a group found in Ecuador.

Dr. Vellard has generously permitted me to describe this new species and has presented the Chicago Natural History Museum with four specimens. In honor of the collector, who was also my companion on numerous trips in southern Perú in 1941, it is named.

Oryzomys (*Melanomys*) *zunigae* sp. nov.

Type. — Chicago Natural History Museum Nº 64340 from Lomas de Atocongo, Department of Lima, Perú. Subadult male collected 8 August 1942 by Enrique Zúñiga. Original number 28.

Color. — The general color of the type above is a grizzled Prouts Brown (Ridgway 1912) becoming lighter on the sides. The individual hairs have dark bases with brown tips or are wholly gray black from base to tip. The general color of the underparts is Buckthorn Brown (Ridgway 1912) with gray black showing through. The

bases of the hairs are dark and the tips light brown. The feet are brown, the tail is blackish brown above and slightly lighter below. There is little variation from these colors in the six paratypes. Compared with *phaeopus* from Ecuador, *zunigae* is much lighter in color.

Skull. — In general shape and tooth pattern the skull agrees with skulls of *Melanomys* but the incisive foramina are relatively longer compared to the length of the diastema. In the *Melanomys* skulls examined the incisive foramina do not reach the anterior level of the molar series while in *zunigae* they just pass beyond it. Specimens of *phaeopus* with a condylobasal length of 27.6 mm. have a diastema of 8.0 mm. and the length of the incisive foramina are 4.9 and 5.3, while in a specimen of *zunigae* with the same condylo-basal length the diastema measures 7.9 and the foramina 6.4. The zygomatic plate in *zunigae* is wider at the base and slopes backward with less shoulder than this plate shows in skulls of *Oryzomys* (*Melanomys*) *c. phaeopus*.

Measurements. — Type (six paratypes in parentheses). Total length 221 mm. (206-241); tail 88 (81-105); hind foot 23-28. Skull: greatest length 29.3 mm. (28.5-30.8); condylo-basal length 27.3 (26.1-28.3); incisive foramina 6.1 (5.6-6.6); diastema 7.6 (7.4-8.2); interorbital width 5.9 (5.6-6.0); zygomatic width 14.7 (14.3-15.5); width of braincase 12.5 (12.5-12.8); length of upper tooth row 5.1 (5.0-5.6).

Specimens examined. — Type and four topotypes (1 male, 3 females); San Jerónimo, 1 male.

Specimens recorded. — Atocongo, 4 males, 3 females; San Jerónimo, 1 male; in collection of Museo de Historia Natural "Javier Prado", Lima.

Remarks. — This new species appears to be most closely related to *Oryzomys* (*Melanomys*) *caliginosus phaeopus* of Ecuador from which it differs in its lighter

color, longer incisive foramina and sloping zygomatic plate. No species of *Melanomys* is known from south of Ecuador. If *zunigae* is confined to the lomas it would not be found north of Trujillo. It is hoped that the survey of the lomas areas can be continued.

I wish to thank Dr. H. E. Anthony of the American Museum of Natural History for the loan of specimens of *Oryzomys* (*Melanomys*) *caliginosus phaeopus* for comparison with *zunigae*.

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