

Article X.—A NEW CARIBOU FROM THE ALASKA PENINSULA.

By J. A. ALLEN.

One of the results of the past season's work of the Andrew J. Stone Expedition is the discovery by Mr. Stone of a new form of Caribou on the Alaska Peninsula. The greater part of the season of 1901 was spent in further exploration of Kenai Peninsula, to complete the work begun there by Mr. Stone during the autumn of 1900, where he obtained a specimen of the new Caribou since described as *Rangifer stonei*.¹

Mr. Stone's familiarity with the large game of the far North had led him to anticipate that the form of Caribou inhabiting the Alaska Peninsula,—the most western portion of the mainland of Alaska, and extending several hundred miles beyond the western limit of tree growth,—would prove of especial interest, and at the close of the season of 1901 he left Homer, on Kenai Peninsula, for the express purpose of securing a good series of specimens of this animal. The journey of nearly 1000 miles was made during the latter part of October, when the season was far advanced and navigation dangerous, but the opportunity seemed too favorable, on account of his comparative nearness to the locality, to forego the chances of the trip. The departure from Homer was made on the 15th of October, and Sand Point, Popoff Island, was reached by steamer four days later, but owing to continuous storms it was impossible to cross to the mainland, only twelve miles distant, till October 26, and it still required two days more to reach the point on the coast, some twenty miles distant, which had been selected as the field of operations. The first day's hunt, on October 29, was rewarded by the capture of nine head of Caribou, and others were taken later, until fifteen fine specimens had been secured.

These specimens, taken October 30 to November 9, are very uniform in their general characters, and differ from the

¹ This Bulletin, Vol. XIV, 1901, pp. 143-148.

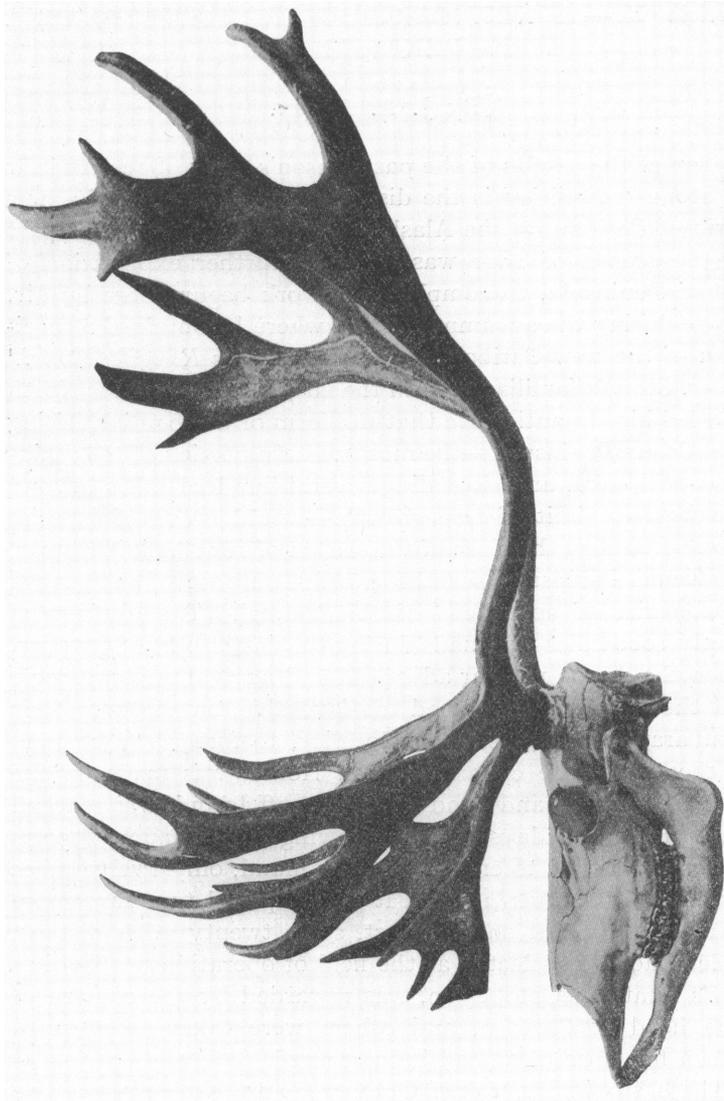


Fig. 1. *Rangifer grantii*. No. 17601, ♂ ad., Alaska Peninsula. Andrew J. Stone Expedition. $\frac{1}{3}$ nat. size.

other forms of Caribou known from North America in various external features and in many cranial peculiarities.

In view of the important services rendered by Mr. Madison Grant, Secretary of the New York Zoölogical Society, in securing funds for the organization and maintenance of the

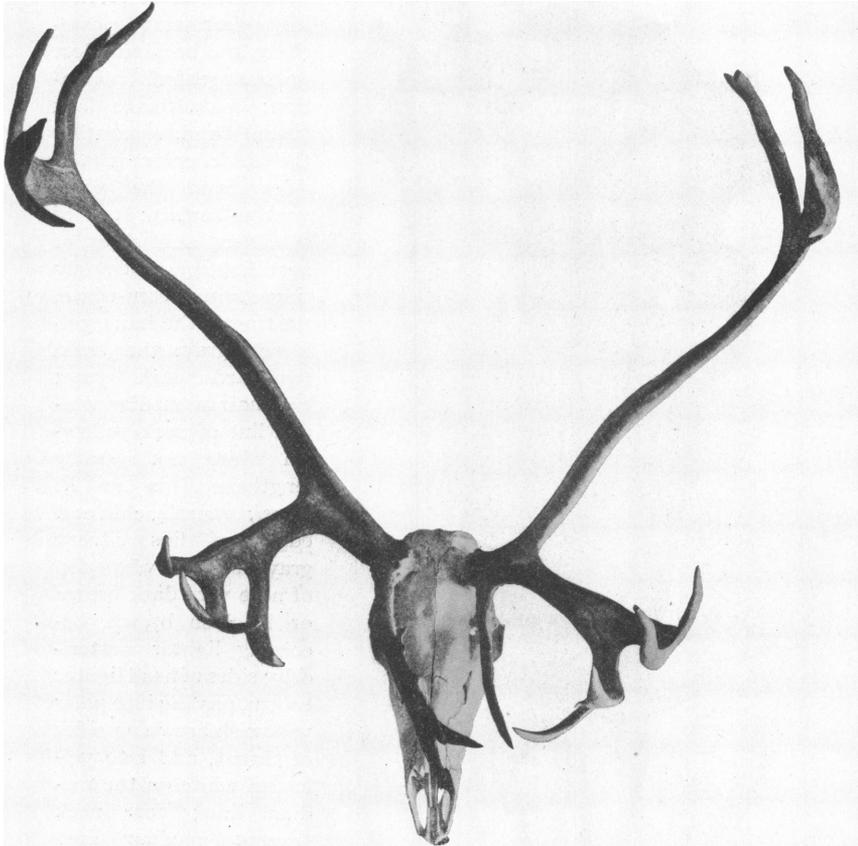


Fig. 2. *Rangifer granti*. Same specimen as Fig. 1. About $\frac{1}{10}$ nat. size.

Andrew J. Stone Expedition, and in recognition of his well-known interest in securing specimens of the game animals of North America for exhibition and for scientific research, this new and very interesting type of Caribou may be fittingly named

Rangifer granti, sp. nov.

Type, No. 17593, ♂ ad., western end of Alaska Peninsula, opposite Popoff Island, Oct. 29, 1901; Andrew J. Stone Expedition.

Adult male, end of October. — General color above dark brown; rump patch white; on lower parts of flanks a broad whitish band

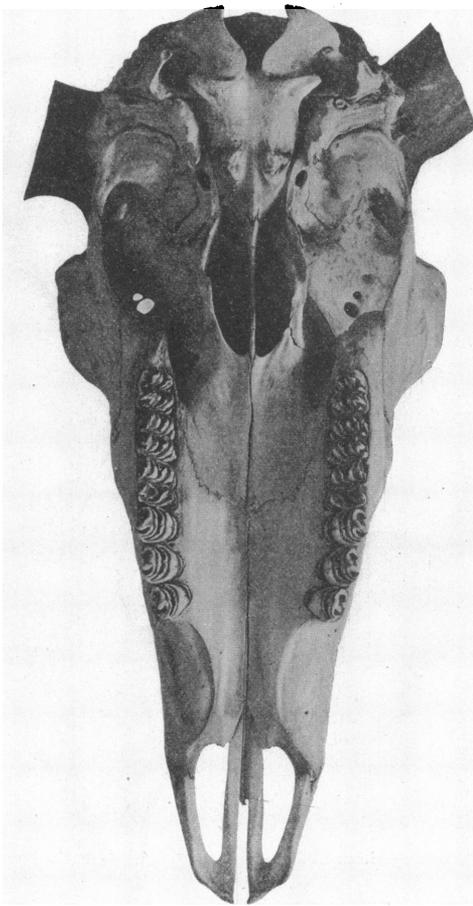


Fig. 3. *Rangifer granti*. ♂ ad. Same specimen as Fig. 1.
About $\frac{1}{2}$ nat. size.

behind the shoulder, rapidly narrowing posteriorly and becoming lost in the general coloration; below this a dark lateral band, separating the dark color of the sides from the white ventral surface; top of shoulders and sides of neck light gray, strongly tinged with cream-white, the tips of the hairs yellowish gray, the basal two-thirds dark gray; long hair on median ventral line of neck yellowish white, not greatly lengthened as in *R. stonei*; muzzle, chin and edges of lips silvery grayish white; whole top of nose very dark brown or blackish brown, becoming lighter posteriorly; sides of head lighter brown, passing into paler yellowish brown on sides of throat, and into yellowish white on the median line; fore neck (except median line) yellowish, the tips of the hairs darker, yellowish gray-brown; pectoral area very dark brown, nearly as dark as the top

of the nose; whole ventral surface yellowish white, becoming nearly pure white posteriorly and on the inside of the thighs; front of fore

limbs dark brown, sides lighter, posterior surface nearly white, forming a narrow longitudinal stripe; hind legs similarly marked but less dark on the outer surface; a narrow line of yellowish white borders the hoofs of both fore and hind feet; tail white, with a dark band continued from the back through the white rump patch onto its upper surface.

Adult Female, end of October. — Considerably lighter throughout than the male, the back and sides broccoli brown, and the dark parts of the face and the pectoral area lighter than in the male.

Young.—A six-months old calf (female) has the general coloration creamy white, clearer white on the ventral surface. The dark areas seen in adults are veiled by the long yellowish white tips of the hairs, being barely indicated as a darker shade showing through the surface on the legs, front of the head and over the middle portion of the back. In general color effect this specimen closely resembles the summer coat of the White Sheep (*Ovis dalli*). It retains its spike antlers, which are still in the velvet, and are black instead of grayish brown, as are those of *R. caribou* and *R. terranova* at a corresponding stage.

A young male of the same age resembles the young female except in being somewhat darker, with the incipient dark areas more strongly outlined. These two young specimens were with their mothers when killed and evidently were not yet weaned, the udders of the old females being full of milk.

The adult male above described as the type is the darkest of the

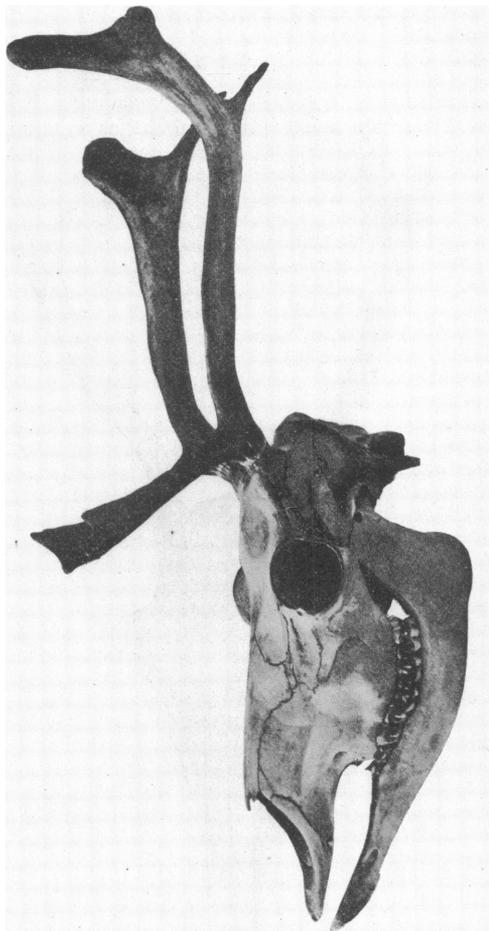


Fig. 4. *Rangifer granti*. No. 17595, ♀ ad., Alaska Peninsula. Andrew J. Stone Expedition. $\frac{1}{2}$ nat. size.

whole series, other males of corresponding age having the dark parts of the body, limbs and head much paler, nearly as in the above described female. The series of four adult males ranges in the color of the dark parts from clove brown to broccoli brown, the variation in color being doubtless due to the seasonal condition of the pelage, the lighter coat being probably a more advanced stage toward the full winter coat.

Measurements.—The collector's measurements given below, taken from the freshly killed specimens before skinning, indicate the very small size of this animal as compared with any of the woodland species, and the great length of the tail vertebræ, which averages 192 mm. in the five males as against 152 in a corresponding series of males of *R. montanus*, notwithstanding the fact that the latter is a very much larger animal. The height of the males at the shoulders is also some 200 mm. less in *R. granti* than in *R. montanus*.

Skull.—In size the skull most resembles that of *R. grænlandicus* (*R. arcticus* is not available for comparison), but the antlers, while light and slender, are about one third shorter in the length of the main beam, and the brow antlers and principal branches are proportionately reduced. The skull is rather smaller than in *R. grænlandicus*, with relatively much longer nasals, which average 122 mm. in a series of four males as against 112

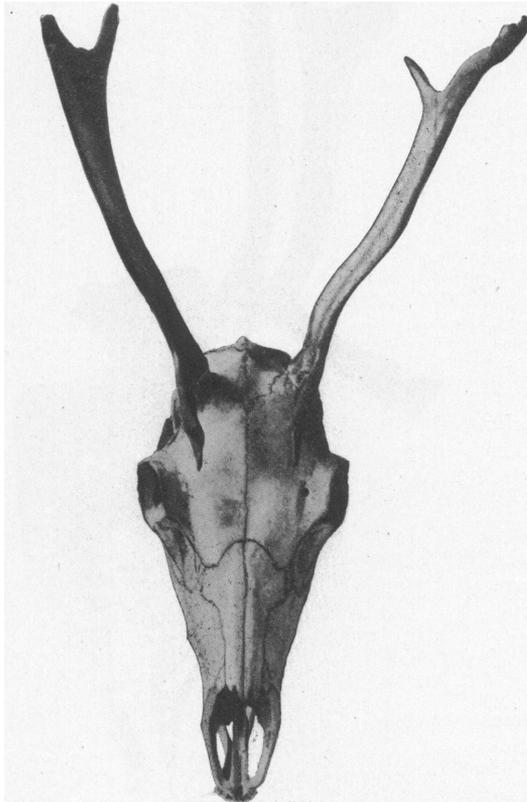


Fig. 5. *Rangifer granti*, ♀ ad. Same specimen as Fig. 4.
 $\frac{1}{2}$ nat. size.

mm. in two males of *R. grænlandicus*, the basal length of the skull averaging the same in both species. The skull differs from

Rangifer granti is a representative of the Barren Ground group of Caribou, which includes *R. arcticus* of the Arctic Coast and *R. grænlandicus* of Greenland. It

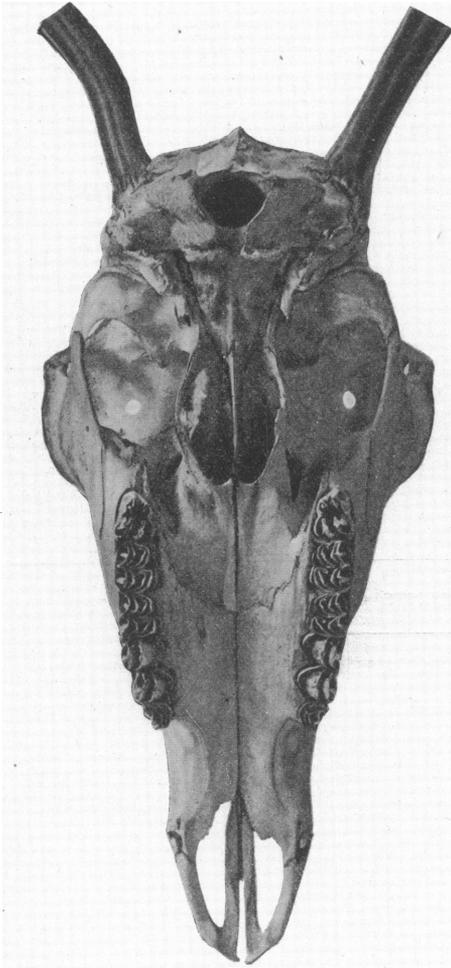


Fig. 6. *Rangifer granti*, ♀ ad. Same specimen as Fig. 4. About $\frac{1}{4}$ nat. size.

is not closely related to *R. stonei* of the Kenai Peninsula, from which it differs not only in its very much smaller size, but in important cranial characters and in coloration. *R. stonei* was described¹ from a single fine head (including both skin and skull), collected by Mr. Stone on the Kenai Peninsula in 1900. This single incomplete specimen was insufficient to show the very strong differences that obtain between *R. stonei* and *R. montanus*. Mr. D. G. Elliot has since given a full description of the same species² from a mounted specimen collected by Mr. H. E. Lee, on Kenai Peninsula September 5, 1898. Mr. Lee's specimen shows the same type of antlers, with the brow antlers very heavily developed, and distinctive features of coloration, including the absence of a caudal patch, so strongly and uniformly developed in *R.*

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¹ This Bulletin, Vol. XIV, 1901, pp. 143-148, fig. 1-4.

² Publications Field Columbian Museum, Zool. Ser., III, No. 5, pp. 59-62, pl. xi-xiii.

granti. The external and cranial differences between *R. granti* and the various forms of the Woodland Caribou are so great in almost every respect that no detailed comparison is necessary.

According to Mr. Stone, *Rangifer granti* inhabits the "barren land of Alaska Peninsula, ranging well up into the mountains in summer, but descending to the lower levels in winter, generally feeding on the low flat lands near the coast and in the foothills. They formerly lived in considerable numbers on Unga Island, where they are now practically extinct. The only other island inhabited by them is Unimak Island, at the western end of the Alaska Peninsula. They were formerly exceedingly abundant, but they have been of late greatly reduced in numbers through the agency of market hunters."

The habitat of *R. granti* is thus an isolated area occupying the treeless portion of the Alaska Peninsula and (formerly at least) some of the immediately adjoining islands at the extreme western end of the peninsula.

