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## A NEW POCKET GOPHER OF THE GENUS *HETEROGEOMYS* FROM TAMAULIPAS

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On a recent field trip to southern Tamaulipas, Mexico, Mrs. Marian Martin collected a fine series of a large pocket gopher that apparently represents a hitherto undescribed subspecies.

### ***Heterogeomys hispidus negatus***,<sup>1</sup> new subspecies

#### TAMAULIPAS POCKET GOPHER

TYPE: A.M.N.H. No. 147995, skin and skull, adult male, temporal ridges grown together in a low median ridge; Gómez Ferras, 1300 feet elevation, a Mexican village about 45 miles south of Ciudad Victoria and 10 miles west of the Pan American Highway, on the west side of a foothill of the Sierra Madre de Occidental, Tamaulipas, Mexico; collector, Marian Martin, June 19, 1951; besides the type there are 16 topotypes which include one skull without a skin.

GENERAL CHARACTERS: A large blackish brown pocket gopher of the *Heterogeomys hispidus* group with comparatively soft short pelage, naked tail, sparsely haired feet, and nearly naked under parts, differing from the nearest allied forms in being of darker color and noticeably smaller size and having distinctive cranial characters.

DESCRIPTION OF TYPE: The color in fresh glossy pelage is near Mars Brown<sup>2</sup> grading to a lighter shade on under parts owing to an admixture of some light buffy hairs; the tail is naked except for a few scattered hairs and Mars Brown with a small white patch

<sup>1</sup> Refers to relative softness of pelage.

<sup>2</sup> Capitalized color terms are after Ridgway, "Color standards and color nomenclature," Washington, D. C., 1912.

on under side at tip. Hairs on outside of limbs and feet about like back. There is a large, irregular patch of white hair on middle of abdomen. Topotypes in worn pelage are about Cinnamon Brown.

The skull is relatively small and slender; superior outline nearly straight, only slightly depressed in frontal region; rostrum slender, the upper surface of the ascending branches of the premaxillae especially narrow and terminating on a line about even with the posterior border of the nasals; nasals broad anteriorly and sharply tapered backward; zygomatic arches slender, narrow, and evenly bowed, the squamosal arm overlapping the jugal tapered without any prominent protuberances; lambdoid crest in a nearly straight line transversely; bullae small and smoothly rounded; dentition weak, the upper incisors especially slender; palate narrow.

MEASUREMENTS OF TYPE: Skin: total length, 310 mm.; length of tail, 74; length of hind foot, 44. Skull: condylobasal length, 60.2; length of nasals, 24.8; zygomatic breadth, 41; greatest breadth across squamosals, 40.4; interorbital breadth, 10.8; breadth of rostrum in front of zygoma, 11.5; width of palate across outside of last molars, 11.8; alveolar length of upper molar series, 12.5; width of both upper incisors at point of contact, 7.5.

Measurements of largest old male and old female topotypes with temporal ridges fused in a raised sagittal crest, respectively: Skins: total length, 278, 283 mm.; tail, 70, 72; hind foot, 44, 40. Skulls: condylobasal length, 59.2, 60.7; length of nasals, 23.1, 23.1; zygomatic breadth, 40.5, 41.7; breadth across squamosals, 39.5, 39; interorbital breadth, 11.5, 10.6; breadth of rostrum, 13.1, 12.4; width of palate across outside of last molars, 11.1, 11.1; alveolar length of upper molar series, 12.0, 12.8; width across upper incisors, 7.5, 7.4.

REMARKS: *Heterogeomys hispidus negatus* can be readily distinguished from allied forms by its short soft pelage, slender form, and distinctive cranial characters.

It is noticeably smaller and has shorter and softer fur than *H. h. concavus* from Pinal de Amoles, 5500 feet, Queretaro, and the claws on the front feet are more slender, the skull is less massive, with more slender and less squarely spreading zygomatic arches, and the lambdoid crest is nearly straight across instead of being strongly inclined forward in the squamosal portion. Compared with *H. h. hispidus* from Jalapa, Veracruz, 4200 feet, *negatus* differs in much the same general character as it does from *concavus*, and from *H. h. torridus* from Chichicaxtle on the coastal

plains of Veracruz, to an even greater degree. The comparatively weak dentition and narrow palate are characteristic features of the Tamaulipas gopher. In *negatus* the width across the upper incisors averages 7.5 mm., compared with 8.5 in *concausus* and up to 9.0 in *hispidus*. The width of the palate across the outside of the molariform teeth at the widest point does not exceed 11.8 mm. in *negatus*, 13.0 in *concausus*, and 12.5 in *hispidus*.

Typical specimens of *Heterogeomys h. concausus* were examined through the courtesy of the United States Fish and Wild Life Service, Washington, D. C.

According to the collector's field notes, the "tuza," as this gopher is called by the Mexicans, is restricted to a belt along the foothills on the eastern slopes of the Sierra Madre. Fresh mounds of earth thrown up by these gophers were found in overgrown fields, in sparsely planted sugar cane, and in banana plantations. The densest concentration of diggings was on a steep slope where one could hardly walk without stepping into a burrow. Gopher workings were not confined to cultivated areas but occurred along the trail in other near-by locations at elevations of about 1300 feet. There was no evidence of gophers seen at 3500 feet in the temperate and wet regions nor on the hot, relatively dry lowlands.

None of the 12 females taken between June 19 and 30 showed signs of breeding. One female dated July 4 contained one embryo 58 mm. long.

As in most species of *Heterogeomys* there is an irregular patch of white hair variously placed on the abdomen on all but four of the Tamaulipas specimens.

