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A SECOND SPECIMEN OF THE PAPUAN EARLESS WATER RAT, *CROSSOMYS* *MONCKTONI*

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This remarkable rodent was first made known by Thomas (1907). Since then the hitherto unique type has been restudied by Rümmler (1938), Ellerman (1941), and myself (in press).

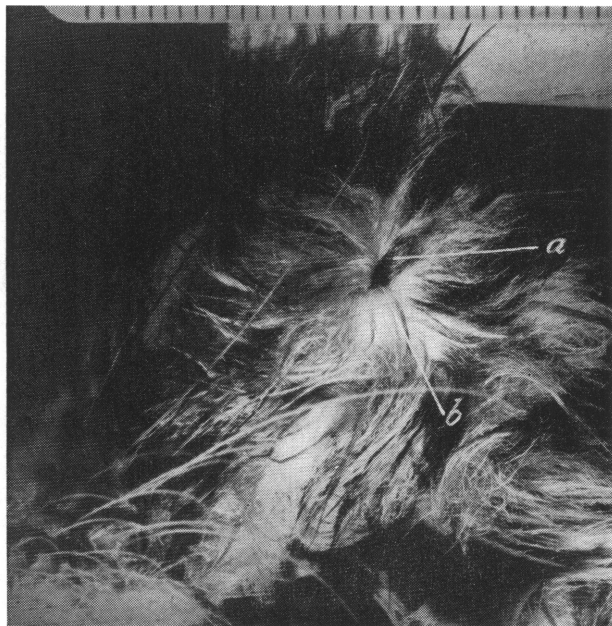


FIG. 1. External ear of *Crossomys moncktoni*. A. Pinna. B. Meatal opening.

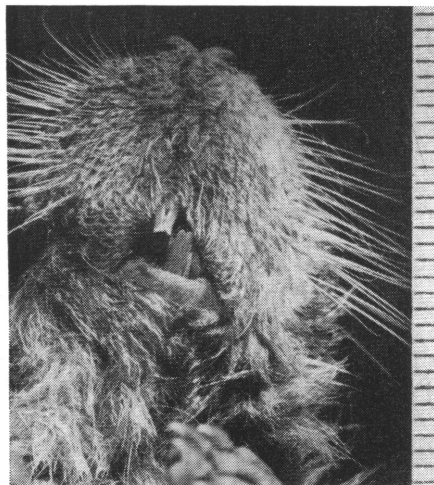


FIG. 2. Mouth of *Crossomys moncktoni*, showing short, stiff hairs on upper lips and the narrow incisors.

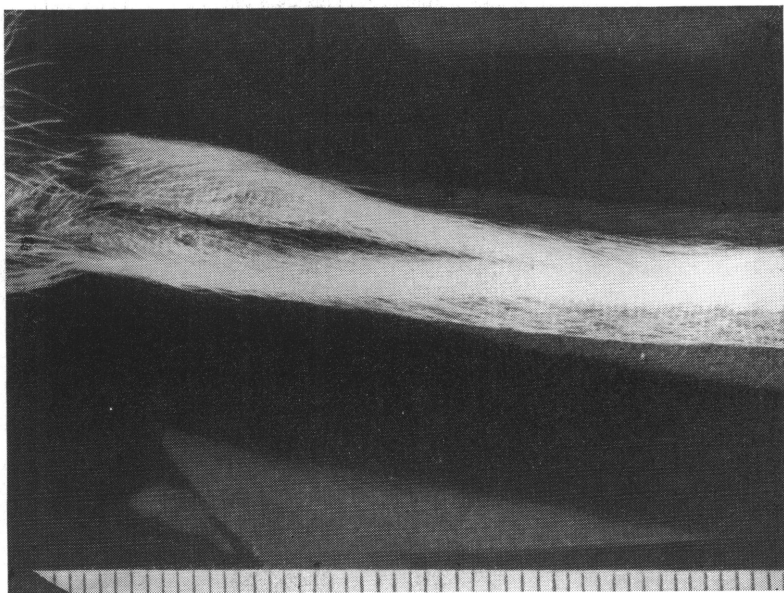


FIG. 3. Under side of the base of the tail of *Crossomys moncktoni*, showing two rows of distally converging, white, swimming hairs.

One of the most important results of Mr. E. T. Gilliard's recent expedition to central New Guinea was the procuring of a second specimen of *Crossomys*, also, like the type, a young female. The newly acquired specimen (A.M.N.H. No. 147529) has been preserved whole in alcohol-formalin solution and is in excellent condition. The outstanding external character, the extreme degree of reduction of the pinna of the ear, is easily observed (fig. 1a). The pinna is reduced to a tiny ovate lobe extending upward and backward from the meatal opening (fig. 1b). The fleshy tissue around the meatus proper gives the impression that the animal may be able to close the opening at will. A character to which attention should also be drawn is the development on the upper lips on either side of the mouth of short strong bristles that may have a rasping function (fig. 2). These are less developed in *Hydromys* and *Parahydromys*. The double row of white, swimming hairs beneath the basal part of the tail (absent in *Hydromys* and *Parahydromys*) is perfectly distinct (fig. 3). This structure is essentially similar to what we see in the Himalayan water shrew *Nectogale*. The mammary formula is $0-2=4$. This is the typical formula for *Hydromys* and allies. No pectoral mammae could be found. In most respects the animal resembles a small *Hydromys* (e.g., *H. habbema*). The skull has not yet been taken out and cleaned.

Mr. Gilliard states that the new specimen was caught by the tail July 21, 1950, by a native after it had swum under a rock in a little stream in the kunai grass near Melgavaigis at about 7500 feet above sea level. This is a village 10 miles southeast of Tomba, 40 miles from Hagen airfield on the track to Wabag.

Mr. Gilliard thought he saw a second specimen at 11 A.M. in bright weather on Mt. Wilhelm at about 8800 feet, in a little stream at the source of the Chimbu, a tributary of the Purari River, but this may instead have been either *Hydromys habbema* or *Baiyankamys shawmayeri*, both of which are about equal in size to *Crossomys moncktoni*. That specimen was in midstream, resting quietly on some rocks with a little water over them, but though promptly surrounded by natives it escaped. The native name for it is "con-do-min."

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