

A NEW GENUS, SPECIES, AND SUBSPECIES OF MARSUPIAL MICE (FAMILY DASYURIDÆ).

By

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(Plate xxxix.)

FROM time to time the Australian Museum has received small collections of mammals from Mr. F. L. Berney, of Queensland, which constitute very valuable additions to our material. Recently having occasion to check the identity of three pouched mice from the Richmond district, Queensland, presented by him in 1910, I found the specimens to be of unusual interest; one, which had been incorrectly relegated to *Phascogale minutissima*, proves to be a race of *Ph. ingrami*, providing the first record of the species' occurrence in Queensland, and warranting subspecific distinction, while the other two, belonging to the genus *Sminthopsis*, will be dealt with in another paper.

Since Thomas¹ described *Phascogale ingrami* from Alexandria, Northern Territory, Lönnberg² has described *Ph. subtilissima* from Noonkambah, Kimberley, north Western Australia. As both species, which are clearly differentiated by their characters and geographical range, exhibit an extraordinary flattening of the skull unique amongst marsupials, and described by Thomas as only equalled by four other mammals, three of which are bats, their retention within the genus *Phascogale* appears no longer justified. In a recent paper on the "External Characters of the Dasyuridæ," Pocock³ says: "From the evidence supplied by the variation in the rhinarium, ears, marsupium, and other characters, it seems probable that *Phascogale* will prove to be divisible into several genera," and that "until more spirit preserved material than is now available comes to hand for examination and comparison, it will be wiser to leave the genus in its present somewhat chaotic state."

While a critical examination of the spirit collection of pouched mice was being made, a specimen collected by the late Richard Helms during the floods on the Darling in 1890 was found which has the skull flattened in a manner similar to the above species and characters necessitating its description as new. There now exist at least three species clearly differentiated by the marked

¹ Thomas.—Proc. Zool. Soc., 1906, p. 541, pl. xxxvii, fig. 2.

² Lönnberg.—Kungl. Sv. Vet. Akad. Handl., liii, 1, 1913, p. 9.

³ Pocock.—Proc. Zool. Soc., 1926, p. 1082.