

Neotype Designation for the Australian Pig-footed Bandicoot *Chaeropus ecaudatus* Ogilby, 1838

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ABSTRACT. The original description of the now extinct Australian Pig-footed Bandicoot *Chaeropus ecaudatus* Ogilby, 1838 was based on one specimen from which the tail was missing. Re-examination of the skull thought to be the holotype of *C. ecaudatus*, revealed that it was associated with a skeleton with caudal vertebrae, thereby negating its type status. The holotype has not been reliably sighted since 1860 and is presumed lost as it has not been identified in world collections. We designate PA422, a skull and partial skeleton in the Australian Museum, Sydney as neotype for *Chaeropus ecaudatus*. This arose from a recent taxonomic revision of *Chaeropus* that recognized two subspecies of *C. ecaudatus*, prompting resolution of the type material of nominate *ecaudatus*.

Introduction

The extinct Pig-footed Bandicoot *Chaeropus ecaudatus* Ogilby, 1838 has long been regarded as a monotypic species within a monotypic genus following the decision of Iredale & Troughton (1934). Jackson & Groves (2015) give a summary of the taxonomic history of the genus. In their generic revision, Travouillon *et al.* (2019) described a new species and recognized two subspecies within *C. ecaudatus*. Their taxonomic work required resolution of type material for nominate *C. ecaudatus*, the holotype of which was thought to be lost (Parnaby *et al.*, 2017). Although Travouillon *et al.* (2019) concluded that the holotype was PA422 in the Australian Museum (AM), this has subsequently been invalidated, necessitating designation of a neotype for *C. ecaudatus ecaudatus*.

The original description of *Chaeropus ecaudatus* was based on the drawings and field notes of Sir Thomas Mitchell who collected a single specimen near the Murray River in New South Wales. The specimen did not have a tail, which

led Ogilby (1838), who never examined the specimen then in the Australian Museum, Sydney, to name the species “*ecaudatus*” meaning tailless. Mahoney & Ride (1985) concluded that Mitchell’s original specimen was listed in the first AM catalogue (Bennett, 1837: 7) as number 35, a female, which is listed without a name as “A new and undescribed marsupial animal, of singular form”. Their conclusion appears to be based on elimination of other unnamed new mammal species listed by Bennett, which Mahoney (1982) had established to be rodent taxa. Krefft (1864) lists only two specimens of *Chaeropus ecaudatus* in the Australian Museum collection, an adult male from “Gall Creek”, which originally came from Museum Victoria (MV), and a skull from the lower Murray, which he thought was Sir Thomas Mitchell’s original specimen. Gerard Krefft was first employed at the AM in 1860. Krefft (1870) states that he found the original skull “10 years ago” but did not locate the associated skin, which he concluded had been destroyed through the neglect of his curatorial predecessors. Troughton (1932) believed the holotype disappeared from

Keywords: Peramelemorphia; holotype; *Chaeropus*; neotype; museum specimen; Gerard Krefft; Sir Thomas Mitchell

Zoobank registration: urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:0C2213A9-4CF9-45A4-A5D5-18B489FD4C9E

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Received: 26 August 2019 **Accepted:** 3 June 2020 **Published:** 29 July 2020 (in print and online simultaneously)

Publisher: The Australian Museum, Sydney, Australia (a statutory authority of, and principally funded by, the NSW State Government)

Citation: Travouillon, Kenny J., Harry Parnaby and Sandy Ingleby. 2020. Neotype designation for the Australian Pig-footed Bandicoot *Chaeropus ecaudatus* Ogilby, 1838. *Records of the Australian Museum* 72(3): 77–80. <https://doi.org/10.3853/rj.2201-4349.72.2020.1761>

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