

A NEW SPECIES OF THE GENUS *CROCIDURA* WAGLER (INSECTIVORA : SORICIDAE) FROM WRIGHT MYO, SOUTH ANDAMAN ISLAND, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

A new species of shrew, *Crocidura jenkinsi* sp. nov., is described from Wright Myo, south Andaman Island, India. Moderately large size, bistre coloured dorsum, semispinous pelage and tail shorter than head and body length are its important features.

During the faunistic survey of the Andaman group of Islands by the Zoological Survey of India party in 1972, a specimen of the shrew belonging to the genus *Crocidura* Wagler was collected from Wright Myo, South Andaman Island, which does not agree with any known species of the genus. The specimen was sent to the British Museum, London, for comparison with the holotype of two nearest species, namely, *C. hispida* Thomas and *C. andamanensis* Miller. According to Dr. P. D. Jenkins of the Mammal Section, it does not fit with either of the two. A new species is therefore proposed to accommodate the present specimen.

The measurements of *C. nicobarica* and *C. andamanensis* were taken from original description (Miller, 1902) and those of *C. hispida* were taken by Dr. Jenkins. The colour names given in the text with initial capital letters are according to Ridgway's (1886) nomenclature.

Crocidura jenkinsi, sp. nov.

Material : Holotype : Z. S. I. Reg. No.

19860, adult female ; Wright Myo, South Andaman Island, India ; 26 July 1972 ; Coll. Dr. A. K. Mandal ; study skin and skull ; deposited in the Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta.

DESCRIPTION

A moderately large *Crocidura* with semispinous pelage ; under the microscope many of the hairs appear flat and broad. Dorsum bistre coloured ; hairs moderate in length measuring upto 7 mm. on the back. Venter brown coloured ; hairs thick but smaller than those of dorsum. Hands and feet Wood brown in colour ; sparsely haired ; hairs over claws pure white. Tail shorter than head and body length (Table I) ; Seal brown in colour ; sparsely clothed with short white hairs, interspersed with a few longer ones. Vibrissae bistre coloured ; fairly well developed, measuring upto 33 mm. and directed backwards. Ear small, almost round in outline. Eye very small. Tip of rostrum bifurcated. Lateral glands well developed, situated nearly half way between the fore and hind limb.

Around the gland, fur rather sparse and of Isabelline colour.

Skull without any marked peculiarities and very similar to that of *C. hispida*. However, the condylobasal length as percentage of head and body length is much smaller in *jenkinsi* (Table I).

Diagnosis : Moderately large size ; Bistre coloured dorsum ; semispinous pelage ; tail shorter than head and body length.

compared the present specimen with other species of the genus *Crocidura*.

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TABLE 1. Summary of external and cranial characters of the type of four species of the genus *Crocidura* Wagler. (Colour characters of *hispida*, *andamanensis* and *nicobarica* were taken from the original descriptions while some characters were studied by Dr. Jenkins.)

Characters	<i>C. hispida</i>	<i>C. andamanensis</i>	<i>C. nicobarica</i>	<i>C. jenkinsi</i>
Dorsal colouration	Gray with a brownish wash	Gray with a wash of Broccoli brown	Prouts brown	Bistre
Length of dorsal hairs	8 mm.	8 mm.	4 mm.	7 mm.
Texture of pelage	Semispinous, many of the hairs flat and broad	Smooth and velvety, some of the hairs flat but not broad	Crisp and velvety, some of the hairs flat, broad and thickened at the edges	Semispinous, many of the hair flat and broad
Length of head and body	85 mm.	114 mm.	120 mm.	107 mm.
Length of tail	103 mm.	86 mm.	90 mm.	95 mm.
Length of hind foot	25.5 mm.	25 mm.	24 mm.	26 mm.
Condylobasal length	27.4 mm.	25.6 mm.	26 mm.	26.4 mm.
Condylobasal length as percentage of head and body length	32%	23%	22%	25%
Length of maxillary tooth row	12.3 mm.	12 mm.	12.8 mm.	12.4 mm.
Length of mandible	14.9 mm.	15 mm.	15 mm.	14.6 mm.

Relationship : *Crocidura jenkinsi* is allied to *C. nicobarica*, *C. andamanensis* and *C. hispida* but differs from all of them as shown in table 1.

Etymology : The species is named after Dr. P. D. Jenkins, Mammal Section, British Museum, London, who kindly studied and

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REFERENCES

- MILLER, G. S. 1902. The mammals of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands., *Proc. U. S. natn. Mus.*, (Washington) 24 : 751-795.
 RIDGWAY, R. 1886. *Nomenclature of colors*. Little Brown & Co., Boston.