

A NEW MAMMAL RECORD (SORICIDAE) FOR THE ADDO
ELEPHANT NATIONAL PARK, WITH NOTES ON
ADDITIONAL SPECIES WHICH MAY BE EXPECTED TO
OCCUR

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In a paper on the small mammals of the Addo Elephant National Park (AENP), Swanepoel (1975, *Koedoe* 18: 103-130) listed 40 species (10 orders, 19 families) of mammals occurring in the Park. Results of De Graaff & Nel (1970, *Koedoe* 13: 147-149), were incorporated and discussed where relevant. However, those from De Graaff (1974, *Koedoe* 17: 173-183) were not available at the time.

Additional species of mammals belonging especially to the orders Insectivora, Chiroptera, Rodentia and Carnivora were suspected to occur by virtue of being known to occur in similar habitat and/or the general vicinity of the Park.

During an ongoing herpetological survey of the AENP, one of us (WB) collected a species of shrew which proved to be a new record for the AENP (classification, nomenclature and vernacular names of Swanepoel, Smithers & Rautenbach 1980, *Ann. Transv. Mus.* 32: 155-196).

Suncus infinitesimus chriseos (Kershaw, 1921). Least dwarf shrew. One lactating female with 3 pairs inguinal mammae was collected at 16h30 on 23 April 1981, while excavating an old termite nest in the Bontveld plant community (Archibald 1955 *J. S. Afr. bot.* 20: 137-154), approximately one half kilometer southwest of trap locality 6 of Swanepoel (1975: Fig. 1). The weather was sunny (5% cloud cover) with a mild easterly wind. The locality was recorded as, Cape: Alexandria dist.; 5,8 km S, 19,0 km W Paterson, 33°29'26''S/25°45'47''E (3325BD), 300 m a.s.l. The skin is preserved in 50% propanol with skull removed and housed in the Kaffrarian Museum (KM24273).

In the AENP three species of snake, *Typhlops lalandei*, *Homoroselaps lacteus* and *Psammodromus rufus*, have been found to utilise old termite nests as retreats. Of these only the latter is considered a potential predator on *Suncus infinitesimus*. External and cranial measurements in mm of the specimen are: length of tail 24;

length of hind foot 9; length of ear 8; greatest length of skull 14,6; condylo — incisive length 14,4; condylobasal length 13,2; breadth of braincase (= greatest width) 6,2; interorbital breadth (=least interorbital width) 3,0; maxillary breadth (=bimaxillary width) 4,4; length of upper tooththrow (to front of I) 6,0; length of upper tooththrow (alveolar) 5,3; posterior median height of braincase 3,5; mandible and incisor length 8,4; length of mandibular tooththrow (= lower tooththrow length) 5,5.

Of the four species of *Suncus* endemic to Africa (Heim de Balsac & Meester 1977, *In: Meester & Setzer, The Mammals of Africa: An identification Manual*, Washington: Smithsonian Institution), three occur in southern Africa. Meester & Lambrechts (1971, *Ann. Transv. Mus.* 27: 1-14) reviewed the genus in southern Africa (based on 224 specimens, about half of which consisted of owl pellet material), and assigned all southern African material of *S. infinitesimus* to one (*S. i. chriseos*) of the three subspecies recognized. Following these authors, we therefore, assign our specimen to *S. i. chriseos*.

The skull measurements proved to be average to less than average in size compared to those given by Meester & Lambrechts (1971). However, all fall within the observed range of measurements.

Material to describe the distribution of this species in southern Africa and elsewhere is inadequate, and for a satisfactory study of intraspecific variation to be conducted, the need for more material is critical.

In southern Africa *S. infinitesimus* occurs in southern and southwestern Transvaal, Natal, and eastern Cape Province. Extralimitally it is found in Kenya, Central African Republic, and Nigeria.

Generally it is misleading to identify southern African mammals to subspecies. Most have not been adequately studied at this level and in the case of many others, sufficient material from throughout their distribution range are not available. Therefore, Brain's (1966, *SAMAB* 8: 349-355) conclusion that in mammals the situation at the subspecies level was rapidly being resolved was misleading.

De Graaff (1974) noted the occurrence of rodent species for the National Parks of South Africa. A number of these from the AENP requires comment.

Although *Desmodillus auricularis* (Short-tailed gerbil) was reported not to occur in the AENP, Swanepoel (1975) in fact collected this species there. Two species (*Gerbillurus paeba* Hairy-footed gerbil, *Otomys angoniensis* Angoni vlei rat) considered by De Graaff to occur, has not been confirmed yet. *Gerbillurus paeba* may occur, but little if any suitable habitat exists. *Otomys angoniensis* is unlikely to occur since the closest confirmed record of this species to the AENP is from Rolfontein Provincial Nature Reserve near Petrusville (Jooste, unpublished data) (material in the Kaffrarian Museum). An unconfirmed record exists from the vicinity of Queenstown (De Graaff 1981, *The Rodents of Southern Africa*, Durban: Butterworths).

The occurrence of *Mus musculus* (House mouse) was reported by De Graaff (1974), and although Swanepoel (1975) did not obtain this species from the AENP we consider it likely to occur. The genus *Dendromus* (Climbing mouse) has not been obtained from the AENP (Swanepoel 1975). However, De Graaff (1974) believed

that all southern African species (*melanotis*, *mesomelas*, *mystacalis*) may occur. We agree that this genus may be present in the Park.

Two further rodents which De Graaff (1974) considered likely to be found in the AENP are *Thamnomys dolichurus* (Woodland mouse) and *Graphiurus ocellatus* (Spectacled dormouse). These may indeed occur and are most likely to be found in the Coastal Bush, Mixed Scrub and Grassland, and Bontveld plant communities.

In conclusion we list mammals that have not been reported or anticipated before to occur in the AENP, but which in time may be shown to occur: *Myosorex varius* (Forest shrew); *Tadarida aegyptiaca* Egyptian free-tailed bat); various other bat species as transients; *Mus*. spp. (pygmy mice) — both *M. minutooides* and *M. indutus* may occur (the presence of these two species in the general area has been illustrated by Matthey. (1964 *Arch. Bull.* 75: 169-206; see also Davis, 1974, *Ann. Transv. Mus.* 29: 135-184)); *Otocyon megalotis* (Bat-eared fox) (in the meantime confirmed by H. Braack to occur, *pers. comm.* to C.T. Stuart); *Mellivora capensis* (Honey badger); *Atilax paludinosus* (Water mongoose); *Cynictis penicillata* (Yellow mongoose, now confirmed, sight record by PS, 7 August 1982; and H. Braack, *pers. comm.*); *Herpestes ichneumon* (Large grey mongoose); *Crocuta crocuta* (Spotted hyaena) as vagrants (a specimen in the Kaffrarian Museum collected n 6 km east of the AENP on the farm Irene in 1978); *Felis lybica* (Wild cat); and *F. nigripes* (Small spotted cat).

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