

OCCASIONAL PAPERS OF THE MUSEUM OF
ZOOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW RACE OF POCKET GOPHER
(*GEOMYS LUTESCENS HYLAEUS*) FROM
NORTHWESTERN NEBRASKA

BY PHILIP M. BLOSSOM

THE specimens of pocket gopher taken while I was making an ecological survey of the mammals of the Pine Ridge in northwestern Nebraska in 1935 prove to represent an undescribed race. William Henry Burt first called attention to the distinctness of this form.

Five specimens of *Geomys lutescens lutescens* were kindly loaned for comparison by the United States Biological Survey.

Geomys lutescens hylaeus, n. subsp.

Pine Ridge Pocket Gopher

TYPE.—Adult female, skin and skull, U.M.M.Z. No. 77890; from ten miles south of Chadron, Dawes County, Nebraska; collected June 19, 1935, by P. M. Blossom; original number 709.

CHARACTERS.—Skull similar to *Geomys lutescens lutescens*, but averages slightly smaller in length and zygomatic breadth. Color averages decidedly darker, with a dorsal stripe of dusky color from nose to base of tail.

COLOR.¹—Type: upperparts between Snuff Brown and Sayal Brown, except dorsal stripe, which is near Sepia. Sides, Sayal

¹ Capitalized color terms after R. Ridgway, *Color Standards and Color Nomenclature* (Washington, D. C., 1912), 44 pp., 53 pls.

MAILED

APR 11 1938

Brown, shading to Snuff Brown on cheeks, and Cinnamon on lower parts of rump. Underparts Drab, with, in places, plumbeous base of hairs showing through. Throat, white. Forearms and feet, white. Tail above and below, white, shading to Sepia on upper proximal third.

There is some color variation in four adult paratypes, but the palest individual of *hylaesus* is much darker than the darkest individual in a series of five near topotypes of *lutescens* from Lincoln County, Nebraska. One subadult paratype of *hylaesus* is essentially the color of the adults, while five paratypes in juvenile pelage are quite constant in color and are between Wood Brown and Vinaceous-Buff.

MEASUREMENTS (in mm.).—Type: total length, 238; tail, 69; hind foot, 29.7. Skull: basilar length of Hensel, 35.5; length of nasals, 14.4; zygomatic breadth, 25.2; mastoid breadth, 23.9; interorbital constriction, 6.5; width of rostrum, 10.1; alveolar length of upper molar series, 8.5. Body measurements of three adult female paratypes (one with stub tail): 241, (216), 237; 77, (46), 72; 29, 29, 31. Average skull measurements of type and three adult female paratypes: 34.9, 14.6, 25.4, 23.6, 6.9, 10.2, 8.7. Body measurements of one adult male paratype: 262, 81, 31.5. Average skull measurements of two adult male paratypes: 39.3, 16.4, 28.0, 25.7, 7.0, 11.1, 8.7.

DISTRIBUTION.—Known only from the Pine Ridge in north-western Nebraska. Probably rather closely associated with the wooded slopes and the riparian associations of the Pine Ridge.

The following specimens have been examined: skins with skulls, 10; skull only, 1; all from the type locality.

DISCUSSION.—The race *Geomys lutescens hylaesus* seems most nearly related to the pale prairie form *lutescens*, from which it differs by having a smaller skull and by darker coloration. An evident relationship appears to exist between the dark coloration of *hylaesus* and the dark, humus-filled soil of its woodland habitat.

Two specimens of *G. l. lutescens* from Dog Ear Lake, Tripp County, South Dakota, in the collection of the Museum of Zoology, are darker than typical *lutescens* and approach the darker and duller color of *hylaesus*.

