

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

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DESCRIPTION OF A NEW WEASEL FROM THE  
QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS, B. C.

BY EDWARD A. PREBLE.

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Last spring I received through the kindness of Rev. J. H. Keen, of Massett, Queen Charlotte Islands, a fine adult weasel in alcohol. As it had not been long immersed, I skinned it at once in order to preserve its color, and presented the specimen to the Biological Survey Collection in the U. S. National Museum. The skin is in late winter pelage, the dark fur of the summer coat just beginning to appear on the head and back.

I was not surprised, considering the isolated habitat, to find that this weasel belonged to an undescribed species, which may be characterized as follows:

***Putorius haidarum* \* sp. nov.**

Type from Massett, Queen Charlotte Islands, B. C. Skin and skull No. 94430, U. S. Nat. Mus., Biological Survey Coll. Collected March 17, 1898, by Rev. J. H. Keen.

*Geographical distribution*.—Known only from the type locality.

*General characters*.—Similar in general characters to *Putorius kadiacensis* from Kadiak Island, Alaska, but differing in smaller size, in the increased amount of black on tail, and in cranial characters; also apparently differing greatly in color of the summer pelage.

*Color of type*.—White, slightly tinged posteriorly and beneath with saffron yellow. Terminal portion of tail, comprising about 60 per cent. of the entire length, black. Small spots of summer fur just appearing on face, top of head, and back, blackish-brown.

*Cranial characters*.—The skull is about the size of *Putorius cicognani*, but

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\* Dedicated to the Haidas, the resident tribe of Indians.



requires no comparison with that species, being much more stoutly built and angular. Compared with *Putorius kadiacensis*, which is undoubtedly its nearest relative, the skull of the present species is considerably smaller, with flatter braincase, mandible more deflected, post-palatal notch much smaller, relatively and absolutely. Zygomata very slender throughout, post-molar production of palate longer and narrower, and post-glenoid space longer and more swollen. Bullæ smaller and flatter. Teeth throughout much smaller than in *P. kadiacensis*.

*Remarks.*—By a fortunate coincidence the type of the present species and the type of *P. kadiacensis*, with which it requires comparison, agree exactly in condition of pelage. Both are also adult males of almost precisely the same age, a circumstance which makes the comparison simple and satisfactory. The fur of *P. haidarum* is finer than that of *P. kadiacensis*. In the latter species the summer fur just appearing is light-brownish in color, thus contrasting quite strongly with the blackish brown of the corresponding portions of *P. haidarum*. The terminal portion of the tail of *P. kadiacensis* is considerably suffused with brownish, while in *P. haidarum* it is pure black. The type of *P. kadiacensis* measured in the flesh: Total length, 318; tail vertebræ, 86; hind foot, 44; pencil of tail, 40. *P. haidarum* measured in flesh: Total length, 275; tail vertebræ, 60; hind foot, 37; pencil of tail, 40. The black portion of the tail measured about 60 mm. in each case, thus comprising about 60 per cent. of the entire length of the tail in *P. haidarum* and about 50 per cent. in *P. kadiacensis*.

The type skull of *P. haidarum* measured as follows: Basal length, 38; zygomatic breadth, 22.5; mastoid breadth, 19; breadth across post-orbital processes, 13; interorbital breadth, 10.5; foramen magnum to posterior plane of molars, 25; palatal length, 15.5; post-palatal length, 20.5.

Unfortunately this skull was infested with parasites, and therefore the measurement of the breadth across post-orbital processes may not be exactly correct.





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