

MYRMECOPHAGA ACULEATA.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Dentes nulli.

Lingua teres, extensilis.

Os angustatum in rostrum.

Corpus (plerisque) pilis tectum.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS.

MYRMECOPHAGA ACULEATA, cauda brevissima.

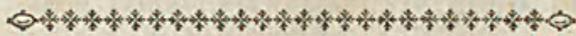
Digna est quæ penitus examinetur hæc species, non modo quod nova prorsus sit et adhuc inaudita, sed quod in ea insigne detur exemplum miræ istius gradationis qua genera diversissima interdum sibi invicem appropinquant. Vinculum videtur esse hæc quo connectuntur genera satis distincta *Hystricis* et *Myrmecophagæ*, cum enim huic sit facie vestituque similior, illius habet rostrum verosque characteres. Pedem circiter unum longa est, quatenus a speciminibus adhuc visis colligi possit: deest igitur figuræ nostræ plusquam dimidia pars magnitudinis naturalis. Totum corpus superius cum cauda spinis contegitur validis et longioribus, quales omnino sunt hystricis vulgaris, nisi quod vice circulorum qui alternatim albi nigrique, plerumque albeant, apicibus altius nigro tinctis, quodque albedo

albedo a nigredine separetur annulo parvo fordide aurantio. Aliæ vero spinæ totæ albescent, si excipias extremitates levissime nigricantes. Caput, crura, corporisque partes inferiores e fusco nigricant, vestiunturque pilis seu setis potius densissimis. Caudæ brevioris apicem denudatæ et paululum complanatæ superficies superior spinis contegitur perpendicularibus, illas saltem longitudine æquantibus quæ in dorso cernuntur. Rostrum longum, nudum, nigrum, tubulatum, eodem modo formatum quo rostrum *Myrmecophagæ jubatæ*, in apice rictum habet minimum, unde lingua lumbriciformis longe protruditur, qualis est etiam *Myrmecophagarum*. Nares parvæ, ad extremum rostri sitæ. Oculi minimi, nigri, iride cærulea. Crura brevissima, crassissima, digitis quinque instructa. Pedum anticorum digitis sunt ungues quinque validissimi, longi, obtusifusculi, nigricantes: posticorum quatuor tantum (pollex enim cæteris latior, ungue caret,) quique differunt inter se: prior scilicet est longissimus, paululum curvatus, et acutus; secundus paulo brevior, sed similiiter formatus; reliqui duo multo breviores, aliquatulum curvi, et obtusifusculi. Vivit proculdubio hæc species more aliarum *Myrmecophagarum*, in tumulo enim quem congefferant formicæ primo deprensæ est, ideoque nomine *Hystricis formicariæ* distincta. Ad nos a Nova Hollandia allata est.

Cum nuperrime detectum sit hoc animal, neminem scientia naturali vel leviter imbutum latere possit minus quam antea convenire Linnæanos characteres generi *Myrmecophagæ*. Cum igitur quæ in generibus *Manis* et *Myrmecophagæ* continentur animalia vestitu solo differant, huic enim corpus squamosum, illi pilosum; fatius forsan

forſan foret duo hæc genera conjungere, annumerata iis
noviſſima hac ſpecie, et ex parte characterum dicere
Corpus vel pilis vel ſquamis vel aculeis veſtitum: ni no-
vum omnino genus inſtituatur, a generibus Manis et
Myrmecophagæ in hoc tantum diſcrepans, quod nec
ſquamis, nec pilis, ſed aculeis contegatur.

THE
PORCUPINE ANT-EATER.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Body (in most species) covered with hair.

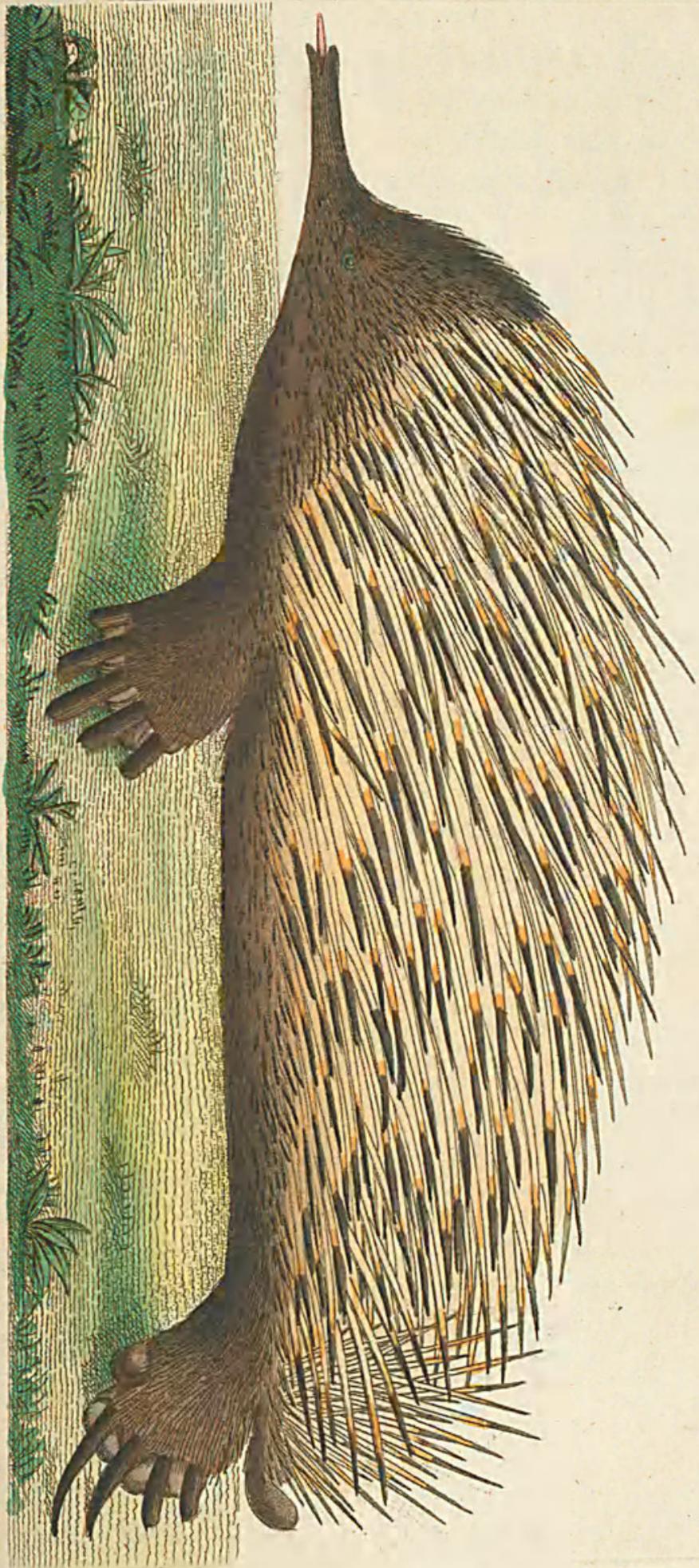
Snout tubular; mouth small; no teeth.

Tongue cylindric, long, extensile.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

SPINY ANT-EATER with very short tail.

This extraordinary animal may well be considered amongst the most curious and interesting quadrupeds yet discovered; since it is not only an absolutely new and hitherto unknown species, but is also a most striking instance of that beautiful gradation, so frequently observed in the animal kingdom, by which creatures of one tribe or genus approach to those of a very different one. It forms a connecting link between the very distant genera of *Hystrix* and *Myrmecophaga*; having the external coating and general aspect of the one, with the mouth and peculiar generic characters of the other. This animal, so far as can be judged from the specimens hitherto observed, is about a foot in length: the figure consequently represents it of nearly half the natural size. The whole upper parts of the body and tail
are



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are thickly coated with strong, sharp spines, of a considerable length, and perfectly resembling those of the common porcupine, except that instead of being annulated with several alternate rings of black and white, as in that animal, they are mostly white, with black tips, the colour running down to some little distance on the quill, and being separated from the white part by a circle of dull orange: others are entirely white, or at least have but a slight appearance of black towards the tips. The head, legs, and whole under parts of the body are of a deep brown or sable, thickly coated with strong, close-set, bristly hair. The tail is short, bare, slightly flattened at the tip, and coated on the upper part of the base, with spines at least equal in length to those of the back, and seated perpendicularly upwards. The snout is long and tubular, and perfectly resembles in structure that of the *Myrmecophaga jubata*, or great ant-eater; having only a very small opening or rictus at the tip, from whence is protruded a long lumbriciform tongue, as in the ant-eaters. The nostrils are small, and seated near the extremity of the snout. The eyes are very small, and black, with a pale-blue iris. The legs are very short and thick, and are each furnished with five rounded broad toes: on the fore feet are five very strong, long, and blunt claws, of a black colour; seated on each toe. On the hind-feet are only four claws, the thumb, which is broader than the rest of the toes, being destitute of a claw. The first claw on the hind-feet is extremely long, somewhat curved, and sharp-pointed; the next rather shorter, but of similar appearance; the two remaining ones far shorter, very slightly curved, and not sharp-pointed.

In

In its mode of life this animal beyond a doubt resembles the *Myrmecophagæ*, having been found in the midst of an ant-hill; for which reason it was named by its first discoverers the ant-eating porcupine. It is a native of New Holland.

It cannot escape the observation of every scientific naturalist, that in consequence of the discovery of this curious animal, the Linnæan character of the genus *Myrmecophaga* is in part rendered inapplicable. Since therefore the animals in the genera of *Myrmecophaga* and *Manis* differ only in the external coating of the body, the former being covered with hair and the latter with scales, it would perhaps be not improper to conjoin the two genera, to add this as a new species, and to give as part of the generic character *Corpus pilis, squamis, vel aculeis tectum*. But if this be not done, it would perhaps be proper to make this animal constitute a new genus, which would differ from the genera of *Manis* and *Myrmecophaga* in having the body coated with aculei, instead of hair as in the *Myrmecophaga*, or of scales as in the *Manis*.



Shaw, George. 1792. "The Porcupine Ant-Eater, *Myrmecophaga aculeata* [Pl. 109]." *The Naturalist's Miscellany* 3(XXXVI), <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.304529>.

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