

NOTE ON THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE NORTHERN SLOW LORIS

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In connection with the examination of a fine specimen of *Nycticebus*, obtained in the Naga Hills by Mr. T. H. Hutton and presented to the National Museum by the Bombay Natural History Society, the following nomenclatural points have arisen.

In writing on this group, certain American authors* have used the specific name *coucang* for the form found in Bengal and Assam, this name being based on Boddaert's *Tardigradus coucang*, which in turn was a technical name applied to Pennant's "Tailless Maucauco."

In the third edition of his Quadrupeds, Pennant gave two different figures of the "Tailless Maucauco" the second of which (obviously a copy of Vosmaer's plate) corresponds with the Assam and Bengal species, while the first is clearly one of the Malay or Island forms, with strong facial markings, including a bifurcated dark line on the crown.

But neither Stone and Rehn, nor Lyon have noticed that, in the first edition of Pennant, which is alone quoted by Boddaert, the latter animal, the form with a bifurcated line, is the only one figured and described, so that it must be the basis of the specific name *coucang*, which should therefore go to one of the Malayan species with this character. It is true that a mention of Bengal is made as locality, but this has evidently come in from some other source, and does not affect the fact that the description and figure apply to the Malayan, and not to the Northern form. To which Malayan species the name *coucang* should go is not at present clear, and perhaps may never be certainly determinable.

But for the Northern form, Geoffroy's name *bengalensis* now becomes available, and will stand for the animal found in Assam, and perhaps in Bengal proper.

The beautiful specimen of *Nycticebus bengalensis* obtained by Mr. Hutton, the first we have received, agrees remarkably well with Vosmaer's characteristic figures of 1770, and should undoubtedly be determined as the *bengalensis* of Geoffroy, based on that figure, unless a definitely different form is hereafter found in Bengal itself.

Mr. Hutton gives the following interesting account of the animal:—

"It was caught in a snare in this district by a Kuki last week. The animal is decidedly rare in this neighbourhood, and is seldom taken, the man who brought it to me having not seen one before and declaring that it must be an immature hoolock. The Kukis have, however, a name (*Mittungkoi*) for the animal and regard it with awe as being the priest of the hoolock. Had the captor known what it was, he would have let it go. It is said to have exceptional vitality, and the one of which the skin is now sent, certainly proved to have, as when brought to me it had been injured internally, as it afterwards appeared, and had one wrist broken and had not had food probably for some days. Nevertheless it survived the amputation of the injured limb under chloroform, and lived for three days, taking only a little milk, and when it became obvious that there was some internal injury, and it was decided that it would be kinder to kill it, this was not done with the ease which one would expect in the case of so small an animal. The Angami and Sema Nagas to whom I showed the animal had never seen one and said they had no name for such. I am sending it to you as I very much doubt whether you have received a specimen from Mr. Mills, from this district."

* Stone and Rehn, P. Ac. Sci. Philad. LIV., p. 137, 1920; Loyn, P. U. S. Nat. Mus., XXXI., p. 532, 1906.



Thomas, Oldfield. 1922. "Note on the nomenclature of the northern slow loris." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 28, 433–433.

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