

America North, Mammals of

Fauna Americana:

BEING

A DESCRIPTION

OF THE

MAMMIFEROUS ANIMALS

INHABITING NORTH AMERICA.

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"The manor of living nature is so ample, that all may be allowed to sport on it freely;
the most jealous proprietor cannot entertain any apprehension that the game will be ex-
hausted, or even perceptibly thinned."

Superbending

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*Species.*2. *Gerbillus labradorius*.

Mus labradorius, Sab. p. 661. append. to Franklin. Penn. Arct. Zool.

DESCRIPTION. Body nearly four inches long; forehead arched, and projecting so as to turn the nose towards the earth; mouth placed far below, small; upper lip slit; ears large, round, and placed far back; whiskers long, black, and projecting, forming two tufts; back, brown above; under parts white, without a dividing line; hind legs long, (one inch and a half,) covered with short hair, having five toes, four long, a shorter one placed on the inside; fore feet short, with four toes; tail two inches and a half long, covered with black hair above, white below, showing the joints of the bones.

Inhabit Labrador. (As usual, Mr. Rafinesque has indicated numerous species.)

Genus.

Arctomys, Gmel. Schreb. Geoff, Cuv. Lacep. Illig.

Mus, Linn. Pall. Bodd.

Glis, Briss. Erxleb.

Marmot.

CHARACTERS.

Dental formula.—Teeth 22.	{ superior 12.	{ Incisor 2.
		{ Canine 0.
	{ inferior 10.	{ Molar 10.
		{ Incisor 2.
		{ Canine 0.
		{ Molar 8.

Incisors very strong, anterior face rounded; the inferior slightly compressed; molars simple, their crowns presenting ridges and blunt tubercles; the anterior and internal one is most projecting; body thick and clumsy; head large, flat above, without pouches for the most part; eyes large; ears short and rounded; feet robust, those before terminated by four distinct toes and a rudiment of a thumb; the posterior five-toed; nails of all the feet strong, compressed, and slightly hooked.

Tail hairy, moderate, or short.

HABIT. Burrowing; living in societies more or less numerous, becoming lethargic during the cold season; feeding on vegetables during the summer; becoming excessively fat; when tamed, they are sufficiently docile; and one species at least, (*Monax*) was never observed to eat animal food.

Inhabit both continents, some preferring northern and elevated countries.

Species.

1. *Arctomys monax*, Gmel. Schreb. tab. 208. *Monax*, Edwards, av. vol. ii. p. 104. *Maryland Marmot*, Penn. Quad. p. 270. N. 178. *Glis monax*, Erxleb. *Le Monax, ou Marmotte du Canada*, Buff. *Cuniculus bahamensis*, Catesby, Carolin. p. 79. tab. 79. *Wood-chuck*, in Maryland. *Ground-hog*, in Pennsylvania.

Char. Essent. Brown above; paler on the sides

and under the belly ; snout bluish-gray and blackish ; tail about half the length of the body, covered with blackish hairs.

DIMENSIONS. Total length from fifteen to eighteen inches.

DESCRIPTION. Body clumsy, low set; snout rather longer than in the Marmot properly so called; ears rounded ; nails long and sharp; colour ferruginous-brown, less deep on the flanks and inferior parts of the back, bluish-gray about the snout ; tail covered with blackish hairs.

HABIT. The ground-hog digs deep holes in clover fields, or on the sides of hills, or under rocks in the woods in the neighbourhood of fields ; these holes are deep and slanting, generally consisting of several compartments, with one or more entrances ; they pass the winter in a state of lethargy ; feed on herbs and fruits, but delight in clover, of which they destroy immense quantities ; the female produces five or six at a birth : when tamed, they become sufficiently docile, and never eat animal food ; when intercepted from their holes, they prefer giving battle to a dog rather than attempt to effect their escape by retreating ; they are more than a match for a dog a size larger than themselves.

Inhabit North America ; abound in the middle states. The above remarks are made from an individual that lived perfectly tame for several months.

Species.

3. *Arctomys empetra*, Gmel. Schreb. tab. 210. Quebec *Marmot*, Penn. Quad. p. 270. n. 199. tab. 24. fig. 2.

Glis canadensis, Erxleb. *Mus empetra*, Pall. (Encycl. pl. 67. fig. 4. under the name of *Marmotte du Canada*.)

Char. Essent. Colour blackish-brown, spotted with white above; ferruginous-red beneath; tail short, blackish at the end.

DIMENSIONS. Total length eleven inches; of the tail two inches.

DESCRIPTION. Colour blackish-brown, spotted with white above, which is owing to the hairs of this part being blackish at their base, then annulated with white, and terminated with black; top of the head of a uniform brown, passing into reddish-brown on the occiput, and to black on the end of the snout; cheeks and chin of a dirty grayish-white; breast and fore paws red; feet black; tail rather short, with abundant black hairs; a variety has only the reddish tint less lively.

HABIT. Unknown.

Inhabit Canada and the environs of Hudson's Bay.

Species.

3. *Arctomys ludoviciani*, Ord, Guthrie's Geog. v. ii. p. 302, 1815. Say, Exped. to the Rocky

Mountains, v. i. p. 451. *Arctomys missouriensis*, Warden's descrip. of the United States, vol. v. p. 627, 1820. *Prairie dog*, Lewis and Clark's Exped. up the Missouri. (A well prepared specimen in the Philadelphia Museum, presented by Lewis and Clark.)

Char. Essent. Colour a light dirty reddish-brown above, intermixed with some gray, also a few black hairs, this hair is of a dark lead colour next the skin, then bluish-white, then light reddish, then gray at tip; the lower parts of the body are of a dirty white colour.

DIMENSIONS. Total length sixteen inches; of the tail two and three quarter inches; hair at its tip three quarters of an inch.

DESCRIPTION. Head wide and depressed above; eyes large; iris dark brown; ears short and truncated; whiskers of moderate length, and black; a few bristles projecting from the anterior portion of the superior orbit of the eye, and also from a wart on the cheek; nose rather sharp and compressed; all the feet five-toed, covered with very short hair, and armed with rather long black nails, of which the anterior one of the fore foot nearly attains the base of the next, and the middle one is half an inch in length; the thumb is armed with a conical nail, three-tenths of an inch in length; the tail is rather short, banded with brown near

the tip, the hair excepting near the body is not plumbeous at base.

HABIT. This interesting little animal is very sprightly, and has received the inappropriate name of *Prairie dog*, from a fancied resemblance of its warning cry to the hurried barking of a small dog; this sound may be imitated with the human voice, by the pronunciation of the syllable, cheh-cheh-cheh, in a sibilated manner, and in rapid succession, by propelling the breath between the tip of the tongue and the roof of the mouth.

As particular districts, of limited extent, are in general occupied by the burrows of these animals, such assemblages of dwellings are denominated *Prairie dog villages*, by hunters and others. These villages differ widely in the extent of surface which they occupy; some are confined to an area of a few acres; others are bounded by a circumference of many miles. The entrance to the burrow is at the summit of the little mound of earth cast up by the animal during the progress of excavation. These mounds are sometimes inconspicuous, but generally somewhat elevated above the common surface, though rarely to the height of eighteen inches. Their form is of a truncated cone, on a base of two or three feet, perforated by a comparatively large hole at the summit, or in the side. The whole surface, but more particularly the summit, is trodden down and compacted; the hole descends vertically one or two feet,

whence it continues in an oblique direction downwards. A single burrow may have many occupants, as many as seven or eight individuals have been observed sitting upon one mound. They delight to sport about the entrance of their burrows in pleasant weather; at the approach of danger they retreat to their dens; or when its proximity is not too immediate, they remain barking, and flourishing their tails on the edges of their holes, or sitting erect to reconnoitre; when fired upon in this situation they never fail to escape; if killed, they instantly fall into their burrows, beyond the reach of the hunter. They pass the winter in a lethargic state, and defend themselves from its rigours by accurately closing up the entrance of the burrow: they construct for themselves a very neat globular cell with fine dry grass, with an aperture at top large enough to admit the finger, and so compactly formed, that it might almost be rolled over the floor without receiving injury. The burrows are not always equidistant, though they occur usually at intervals of about twenty feet. (Say.)

These animals would appear to be very innocent, as we are informed by Gen. Pike, (in his Expedition,) that he has observed "the *Marmot*, the *Rattle-snake*, the *Horned frog*, (*Agama cornuta*, nob.) of which the prairies are full, and the *Land turtle*, seek refuge in the same hole." He further states that the Indians name this animal

“*Wish-ton-wish*,” which they pronounce with a sharp voice, in order to mimic the voice of the animal.

Inhabit North America, abounding in the Missouri country.

Species.

4. *Arctomys tridecemlineata*.

Sciurus tridecemlineatus, Mitchill, Medical Repository, No. 2. vol. vi. January, 1821.

Arctomys hoodii, Sabine, Trans. Lin. Soc. vol. xiii. p. 590. 1822.

Striped and spotted Ground-squirrel, Say, Long's Exped. to the Rocky Mountains, vol. ii. p. 174.

This beautiful little animal has been improperly placed under the genus *Sciurus*, from which it is essentially different, and corresponds with the genus *Arctomys* in the following particulars. 1. In the form and appearance of the whole body in general; 2. in the form of the head and ears; 3. in the length, direction, and form of the tail; 4. in the form and proportion of the legs; 5. in the form and length of the nails; and, 6. in some of its manners and habits. In justice to Mr. Desmarest, we must remark that he has expressed some doubts of the propriety of arranging it under the division in which he had placed it, but not having seen the animal, he was unable to say which genus it most resembles.

Char. Essent. Colour a deep chesnut above, striped with six white lines, alternating with an equal number of longitudinal rows of white spots; white beneath.

DIMENSIONS. Total length six inches five-tenths; of the tail, less than two inches.

DESCRIPTION. Head small, rather flattened above; snout conical; body elongated, low set, thickest behind; extremities short, nearly of equal length; feet covered with hair even to the base of the nails; colour of the animal above of a deep chesnut, and marked with six longitudinal lines, commencing at the occiput, and running the whole length of the body, alternating with a series of white oblong spots, commencing at the shoulders, and continuing along the body; the middle dorsal line is composed of these spots, about eighteen in number, which commence at the nucha and are continued to the base of the tail; throat, breast and belly nearly white; tail short, surrounded with hairs longer than on the body, rather bushy, and of a whitish colour, mixed with black; feet whitish, covered with fine hairs, and terminated by five clawed toes before and behind. Nails on the three middle toes of the fore feet long, subulate, blackish; the middle toe nail is the longest; the external and internal toes and nails very short; hind feet broad and flat; the three middle claws nearly equal; the external and internal nails like those of the fore foot very short. The whole ani-

(A specimen in the Philadelphia Museum, brought by Major Long's exploring party.)

Species.

5. *Arctomys franklinii*, Sabine, Trans. Lin. Soc. vol. xiii. tab. 27. p. 587.

Gray American Marmot.

Char. Essent. Head furnished with small ears; snout very obtuse; tail elongated; body variegated fuscus.

DIMENSIONS. Total length, not including the tail, eleven inches; of the tail to the end of the hair five inches.

DESCRIPTION. Face broad, nearly covered with rigid hairs (black and white;) nose bare and very blunt; ears broad, covered with short hairs; short black whiskers on the cheeks, and similar hairs grow thinly distributed above and below the eyes; throat dusky white; upper incisors short, and of a reddish colour; inferior incisors twice the length of the upper, and paler; upper part of the body with short hairs, dark at the base, in the middle dingy-white, then first black, next yellowish-white, and tipped with black; the whole a variegated dark yellowish-gray; the hair on the sides is longer, has less black, and is without the yellow tinge; that on the belly is dark at base, and dingy-white above; tail with long hairs banded with black and white, tipped with white, the whole appearing indistinctly striped with black and

white; feet broadish; toes thin and gray, covered with hairs; on the fore feet the second from the inside is longest; the outer shortest, and placed far back; the three middle hind toes nearly equal; the extremes shorter and far back; claws horn colour, those on the fore feet long and sharp, those on the hind toes shorter.

Species.

6. *Arctomys richardsonii*, Sabine, Trans. Lin. Soc. vol. xiii. tab. 28. p. 589.

Tawny American Marmot.

Char. Essent. Ears short; snout acute; tail moderate; body fuscus.

DIMENSIONS. Nearly the size of the preceding species, but more slender.

DESCRIPTION. Top of the head covered with short hairs, dark at the base and light at the tips; face narrow; nose tapering and sharp, bare at the end, above covered with short light brown hairs joining and mixing with those on the top of the head; ears oval and short; cheeks swollen, covered with light brown hairs; whiskers short, growing from the cheeks, and a few long and rigid hairs above the eyes; throat dirty white; upper part of the body covered with soft short hairs, dark at the base, above fulvous; in the middle of the back, the hairs are like those on the top of the head, but lighter; sides with longer hairs, showing dark at base when raised, the ends a

smoky white, the under parts similar, but a little dashed with ferruginous; tail three inches and a half long to the end of the hairs, slender, and thinly covered with long hairs, which are at the base of the same colour as the body, but above of three distinct colours, first black, then dark, and lastly light at the upper extremity; legs rather long and slender; feet narrow; claws horn colour, arched and sharp; on the inner side of the fore feet, a small toe placed far back, with an obtuse claw, in which it differs from the other species of this genus; outer toe and claw of the fore feet much shorter than the remaining three, of which the middle one with its claw is longest; of the hind toes, the two extremes shorter and placed back, the others nearly of equal length.

Species.

7. *Arctomys pruinosa*,* Gmel. Syst. Nat. i. 144. Turt. Linn. *Hoary Marmot*, Penn. Hist. Quad. ii. 389. Penn. Arct. Zool. i. 112. Schreb. Quad. 745, Shaw's Zool. iii. 121.

Size of a rabbit; tip of the nose black; ears short and oval; cheeks whitish; crown dusky and tawny; hairs usually rude and long, those on the back, sides, and belly, cinereus at the root, black in the middle, whitish at the tip, so that the animal has a hoary appearance; tail black, mixed with rust colour; legs black; claws dusky.

This specimen was supposed to have come from the northern parts of North America.

Species.

8. *Arctomys parryi*, Dr. Richardson's Appendix to Franklin's Expedition.

Gray Arctic Marmot.

Ground-squirrel, Hearne's Journey, p. 141.

Quebec Marmot, Foster, Philos. Trans. lxxii. p. 378.

Arctomys alpina, Parry's Narrative, 2nd voyage, p. 61.

Char. Essent. "A. palmis pentadactylis; rostro obtusissimo; buccis sacculiferis; auriculis brevissimis; cauda elongata, apice nigra; corpore supra maculis albis nigrisque confluentibus marmorata, subtus ferrugineo."

DIMENSIONS. A size larger than the *A. franklinii*, and less than the *empetra*. Total length, to the base of the tail, twelve to fourteen inches; trunk of the tail four inches, with the hair five inches and a half.

DESCRIPTION. Body broad and flattish, with thick legs; head depressed; nose blunt and covered with a dense coat of short brown hairs; margin of the mouth hoary; eyes large and dark coloured; orifice of the auditory passage large; ear very short, consisting merely of a flat, semi-oval flap, projecting about two lines; pouches ample, opening into the mouth anterior to the grinders; teeth, primores

white, with chisel shaped cutting edges, wearing away, and frequently channelled inside, those in the upper jaw short and somewhat truncated; lower one-third longer, rather narrower, and terminated by nearly a semicircular outline; molars five above and four below, posterior largest; some adults with only four above, their crowns are bounded by an irregular bending plate of enamel, intersected by two transverse ridges of unequal height, and presenting a few obtuse points; back covered with soft fur, consisting of a soft down of a dark smoke-gray at the roots, pale fresh-gray in the middle, and yellow-gray at tips; this arrangement produces a crowded assemblage of ill defined irregular and confluent whitish spots, margined and separated by black and yellowish-gray; these spots assume a transverse arrangement on the posterior part of the back; throat and all underneath brownish-red and brownish-yellow, or rather a colour intermediate; colours of the back and belly run into each other. Tail flattish and subdistichous, the hairs of which the animal is capable of expanding like a feather, in which state the tail is brown along the middle, tipped and margined for two-thirds of its length with black; feet with short depressed claws, large, blackish, slightly arched, and grooved underneath; on the inside of the fore feet, and high up, there is a small toe or thumb armed with a small nail; palms naked and with callous protuberances.

three at the base of the toes, the thumb inserted into the largest.

Habit and geographical range like the preceding species.

Genus.

Sciurus, Briss. Linn. Erxleb. Bodd. Cuv. Geoff. Illig. *squirrel*.

CHARACTERS.

Dental formula.—Teeth 22.	{	superior 12.	{ Incisor 2.
			{ Canine 0.
		inferior 10.	{ Molar 10.
			{ Incisor 2.
			{ Canine 0.
			{ Molar 8.

(NOTE.—The fifth molar exists only in the young individual.)

Superior incisors flat before, and cuneiform at the extremity; the inferior pointed, and laterally compressed.

Molars with tuberculous crowns.

Body elongated; head small; ears straight, moderate and rounded; eyes large. Anterior feet with four long toes, distinct, armed with compressed and horned nails, with a tubercle covered with an obtuse nail, in place of a thumb; posterior feet very large; tarsi very long; five elongated distinct toes, with hooked nails.

Tail long, often furnished with hairs disposed in two rows like the feathers of a quill: *distichous*.