

Hab. MEXICO, Jalapa (*de Oca, U.S. Nat. Mus.*²), Tuxpango (*Sumichrast, ib.*²).

This very dark and glossy-furred Vole was first described by Dr. Coues as a variety of the last species¹; but he subsequently convinced himself that it was quite distinct². Reluctance to injure the type specimens unfortunately prevented his describing the skull and teeth; and further observation is consequently required before its relationship with *A. pinetorum* is set at rest.

Fam. IV. GEOMYIDÆ.

1. GEOMYS.

Geomys, Rafinesque, Am. Month. Mag. ii. p. 45 (1817, fide Baird, Mamm. N. Am. p. 368).

Diplostoma, Rafinesque, loc. cit.

Saccophorus, Kuhl, Beitr. Zool. &c. p. 65 (1820).

Pseudostoma, Say, Long's Exped. i. p. 406 (1823).

Ascomys, Lichtenstein, Abh. Ak. Berl. 1822-23, p. 20 (1825).

The family Geomyidæ is distinguished, among other characters, by the possession of cheek-pouches which open externally on the sides of the face, and are not connected with the mouth—a structure which is not found in any other known Mammal. In geographical distribution it is principally Nearctic; but all the five genera are represented in our subregion. The group presents two very distinct types, which have been sometimes regarded as deserving of full family rank; but in spite of the arguments of Dr. Coues in favour of that course*, I still hold to the view that they may best be treated as sub-families under the names Geomyinæ and Heteromyinæ†.

Of these the first contains thickset fossorial animals with short limbs and tails, rudimentary ear-conchs, and massive skulls, in which the mastoids do not appear on the top of the cranium, and the zygomatic arches are stout and divergent. They fall naturally into two genera:—*Geomys*, with deeply channelled incisors, and very large fore feet and claws; and *Thomomys*, in which the incisors are either plain or only slightly grooved near the margin, the fore feet moderately developed, and the skull less massive.

* See his observations, Proc. Ac. Philad. 1875, pp. 130-138, 272-327; Powell's Exploration of the Colorado River, pp. 217-285; and Mon. N.-Am. Rodent. pp. 487-542, 607-629; which contain very detailed descriptions of the anatomy and characters of the known genera and species.

† Cf. P. Z. S. 1876, p. 69. With regard to the name of the latter subfamily it may be observed that Dr. Coues appears to think it unnecessary to change *Sacomynæ*, Baird, into *Heteromyinæ*, Alston. Dr. Coues himself confesses that there is "no doubt" that *Sacomys* is only a synonym of *Heteromys*; and it appears to me that the laws of nomenclature and of convenience both require that the latter name should be used in composing the title of any superior group.