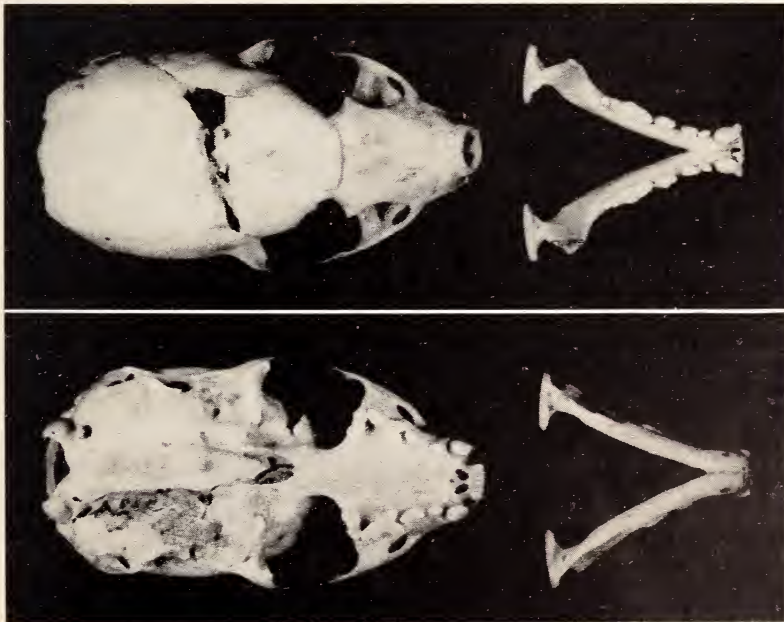


A Note on the Occurrence of the Weasel (*Mustela nivalis* Linnaeus, 1766) (Carnivora: Mustelinae) in Lebanon

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The weasel is quite widely distributed in Asia Minor (DANFORD and ALSTON 1877, ELLERMAN and MORRISON-SCOTT 1951) and Armenia (DAHL 1954); the race *Mustela nivalis subpalmata* Hemprich and Ehrenberg, 1833 occurs in northern Egypt. There has been no recent confirmation of its occurrence in any of the countries forming the northern part of the Arabian peninsula, where it might be expected to occur. Canon TRISTAM (1884) stated that *Mustela boccamela* occurred then in the vicinity of Mt. Tabor, Israel. Although it seems unlikely that TRISTAM was mistaken, there has been no recent confirmation of its existence in Israel and BODENHEIMER (1958) did not include it as a member of the local fauna. HATT (1959) knew of no definite occurrence in northern Iraq, but had received hunters' reports of a weasel-like animal in the Zagros Mountains (Erbil Liwa). CABRERA (1901) reported *M. boccamela* from Alto Karoum (= Upper Karun), and MISONNE (1959) noted it from a number of other localities in Persia, where it seems to be rather uncommon.



♂ Kammouha, Lebanon, 22nd August 1951, collected by DAVID POTTER; skull and mandible, dorsal and ventral views

It is therefore of some interest to report the existence of two specimens of the weasel from Lebanon. The first specimen, a male, now in the collection of the American University of Beirut, was obtained by D. POTTER on 22nd August, 1951 at Kammouha, Lebanon, 4,500 feet. A second specimen in the collection has no precise data but certainly originated from somewhere in the area. The presence of a few undocumented mammal skins from the collection of Dr. SALAH MERRILL at the American University of Beirut suggests the possibility that this weasel came from somewhere in Palestine. Dr. MERRILL collected birds and mammals in the region during his tenure as American Consul in Jerusalem in the early 1900's.

The measurements of these two specimens (see below, Tables 1 and 2) are much smaller than those of the large Egyptian race, *M. n. subpalmata*, and they are clearly not referable to that form. They are also smaller than the range of measurements given by MILLER (1912) for adult males of the Mediterranean form, *M. n. boccamela* Bedstein, 1801. These specimens are, however, closely comparable in all essential features with specimens of the species from Asia Minor in the British Museum collection. More material is required to decide their subspecific status precisely. The characteristics of the described races in the region are not very clearly defined and require further detailed study.

Table 1

External Measurements of *Mustela nivalis* (in mm)

Locality	Date	Total Length	Tail	Hind Foot	Ear
Kammouha, Lebanon	22-VIII-1952	360	70	24 ¹	10
Lebanon. No exact locality.	—	—	—	28.8 ¹	—

¹ Measurements made from skins, without claws.

Table 2

Cranial Measurements of *Mustela nivalis* (in mm)

Locality	Condylobasal Length	Zygomatic Breadth	Breadth of Braincase	Interorbital Constriction	Maxillary Cheekteeth c—m ³	Mandibular Cheekteeth c—m ³	Mandible
Kammouha, Lebanon	37.8	19.7	17.5	7.3	10.7	12.2	20.3
Lebanon. No exact locality.	—	21.1	17.3	7.9	10.8	12.7	21.8

There seems now no reason to doubt the validity of TRISTAM's reported occurrence of the weasel in northern Israel, in view of this new discovery in Lebanon, and it is indeed more than possible that it still occurs there.

We are much indebted to DAVID POTTER for obtaining this unique and interesting specimen.

Conclusion

The weasel, *Mustela nivalis*, is recorded from Lebanon. The subspecific status of the only two specimens known from the country is uncertain. They are smaller than the Egyptian *M. n.*

subpalmata and agree in size with specimens from Asia Minor, possibly referable to *M. n. boccamela*.

Zusammenfassung

Das Mauswiesel, *Mustela nivalis*, wurde im Libanon gefunden. Der subspezifische Status der einzigen beiden bekannten Exemplare aus diesem Lande ist unsicher. Die Tiere sind kleiner als die ägyptische *M. n. subpalmata* und stimmen in der Größe überein mit Exemplaren aus Kleinasien, sind also möglicherweise *M. n. boccamela*.

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Symposium Theriologicum. Proceedings of the International Symposium on Methods of Mammalogical Investigation¹

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Das Symposium, einberufen auf Initiative der Tschechoslowakischen Akademie der Wissenschaften unter Leitung des korrespondierenden Mitgliedes der Akademie, Prof. Dr. J. KRATOCHVIL, fand vom 25. 8. bis 5. 9. 1960 in Brünn statt. Teilnehmer waren 90 Gelehrte aus 16 Ländern, darunter eine repräsentative Gruppe sowjetischer Theriologen. Die 54 gemeldeten Vorträge waren der Methodik der Säugetierforschung gewidmet (Hauptaufgabe des Symposiums) und berührten einen weitgespannten Kreis von Problemen der Systematik, Zoogeographie und Ökologie der Säugetiere, ihrer Morphologie, Physiologie und der „allgemeinen Theriologie“. Überwiegend waren Vorträge zur Ökologie, ökologischen Physiologie und Systematik vertreten.

Der Sammelband, dessen Titel oben aufgeführt ist, enthält eine kurze Darlegung aller auf dem Symposium gehaltenen Vorträge. Die Beiträge sind russisch, deutsch, französisch oder englisch abgefaßt. Die sind mit einem kurzen russischen Resumé versehen, die russischen mit englischem Titel und (leider nicht alle) Resumé. Ferner enthält der Band eine Teilnehmerliste, eine Gruppenaufnahme und eine kurze von den Versammelten angenommene Resolution.

¹ held in Brno, Czechoslovakia, from August 25 to September 5, 1960, ed. by Prof. Dr. J. KRATOCHVIL and Ing. J. PELIKAN. Publishing House of the Czechoslovakian Academy of Sciences, Praha, 1962.

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