

Note on Vicuna × Alpaca hybrids

By H. DE MACEDO

Receipt of Ms. 25. 11. 1981

The possibility of getting hybrids crossing vicuna, *Vicugna vicugna*, and alpaca, *Lama guanicoe* forma pacos (sensu BOHLKEN 1961), is an old established fact. But by no means is this an easy task since the named species do not breed freely even when their flocks are in close proximity, a rather common situation in the Peruvian highlands. An adult male vicugna will never copulate with a female alpaca unless the first has been timely imprinted to a member of the second species. Therefore, the Peruvian native breeders use exclusively a vicuna previously reared from earliest age by an alpaca whenever they want to get the hybrid called 'pacovicuna'.

To obtain a vicuna male involves the hunting of a just newborn animal. Thus, a native shepherd-hunter first spots a flock of pregnant vicunas at the proper season (January to March) and then waits daily for the instant of parturition. At this very moment, he releases one or better, two hunting dogs brought to help him and approaches the newborn as quickly as possible either by foot or on horseback, trying to lasso and then to embrace the young beast which little time after birth, is able to run as rapidly as its mother being then impossible to be reached. It was precisely by this procedure that the shepherds of my ranch 'Checayani' (Azangaro province of the Department of Puno, Peru) succeeded to seize a young male vicuna that was presented to me as a birthday's gift in March 1965. We all agreed that this animal should be lactated and reared by an alpaca which had lost her own offspring, in order that when put into a harem of young female alpacas, we could get the



First generation of Vicuna × Alpaca hybridization, so called pacovicunas

corresponding hybrids. This came true in March 1967 and shortly after, I took the picture here offered to the readers. All shown animals belong to that particular first generation (F_{x_1}). The alpacas of the parental flock were not pure strains and this fact is reflected in the great deal of variation seen in the offspring.

It is also of interest to remember that the Peruvian alpaca breeders distinguish two strains or varieties. One of these is called 'huacaya' and has coarse and rather short wool. The name 'huacaya' comes from the aymara word huacaa, meaning ordinary or common. The other alpaca variety is called 'suri' and has long silky wool. The word suri is the aymara name of the Lesser Rhea or Peruvian 'ostrich' *Pterocnemia pennata*. No doubt the name of the alpaca variety refers to the similarity of its wool with the long and soft loose webbed plumage of the bird which inhabits the highlands between the Puno and Moquegua Departments.

My endeavours to get further pacovicunas came to an end with the loss of my property in 1968, due to the Peruvian agrarian reform.

Literature

BOHLKEN, H. (1961): Haustiere und Zoologische Systematik. Z. Tierzüchtg. Züchtgsbiol. 76, 107–113.

Author's address: Prof. Dr. HERNANDO DE MACEDO, Director, Museo de Historia Natural, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos. Apartado 11434, Lima 14, Peru

Thermopräferenz bei der Gemeinen Vampirfledermaus (*Desmodus rotundus*)

Von U. SCHMIDT und U. MANSKE

Zoologisches Institut der Universität Bonn

Eingang des Ms. 8. 12. 1981

Der Nahrungserwerb stellt die sanguivore Vampirfledermaus (*Desmodus rotundus*) vor Orientierungsprobleme, die allein mit Hilfe der Echoortung nicht gelöst werden können. Besonders bei der Auswahl eines geeigneten Beutetieres und bei der Selektion der Bißstelle müssen andere Sinnesmodalitäten z. B. Geruchs- und/oder Thermosinn, eine Rolle spielen. Obwohl *Desmodus* unter natürlichen Bedingungen wohl ausschließlich vom Blut homöothermer Vertebraten lebt, gibt es bisher keinerlei Hinweise darauf, daß thermische Reize bei der Lokalisation der Nahrungsquelle von Bedeutung sind. Unsere Versuche sollten klären, ob die Auswahl der Bißstelle von thermischen Reizen beeinflusst werden kann.

Für die Experimente standen 2 adulte *Desmodus* (1,1) und 7 Hauskaninchen (Belgische Riesen) als Beutetiere zur Verfügung. Die Vampirfledermäuse waren in einem Flugkäfig (110 × 70 × 100 cm) untergebracht, an dessen einer Stirnseite 3 Isolierkäfige (30 × 20 × 30 cm) angeschlossen. Die Vampire waren daran gewöhnt, defibriertes Rinder- oder Schweineblut aus Vogeltrinkröhrchen zu fressen, die von außen in die Türen der Isolierkäfige eingeschoben wurden.

Vor den Präferenztests wurde jede Fledermaus 14 Tage lang darauf dressiert, Blut aus den Kaninchenohren aufzunehmen. Die Kaninchen waren in passenden Käfigen festgelegt;

ZOBODAT - www.zobodat.at

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

Zeitschrift/Journal: [Mammalian Biology \(früher Zeitschrift für Säugetierkunde\)](#)

Jahr/Year: 1981

Band/Volume: [47](#)

Autor(en)/Author(s): Macedo Hernando de

Artikel/Article: [Note on Vicuna X Alpaca hybrids 117-118](#)