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Chromosomes of the Argentine Andean mouse, *Akodon andinus* (Cricetidae: Sigmodontinae)

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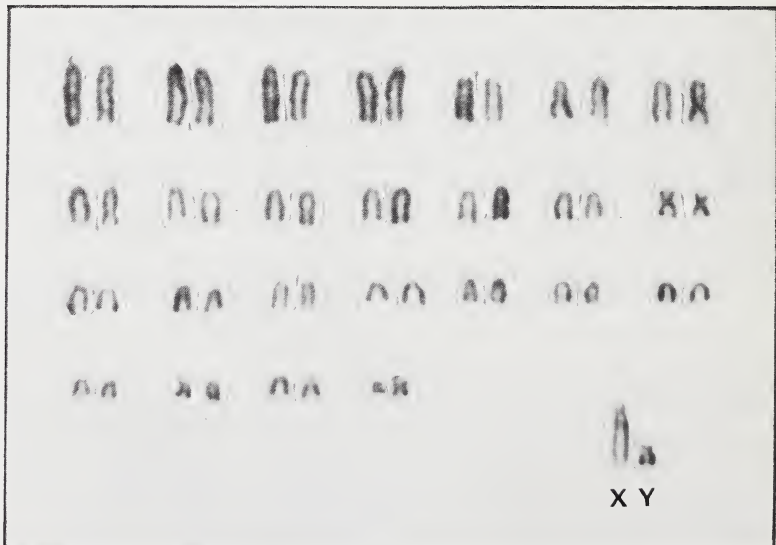
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Cytogenetic analysis was performed on six specimens of *A. andinus* (Philippi, 1858) (two males and four females) collected at Plaza de Mulas, in the eastern slope of the Aconcagua, province of Mendoza, Argentina, at 4,200 m above sea level. Specimens were identified as *A. andinus* by external and cranial characteristics by Prof. JULIO CONTRERAS, and deposited at the Systematic Collection of the CECOAL, province of Corrientes, Argentina. Chromosomes were obtained from bone marrow by routine methods, and Giemsa-Stained G-banded according to SEABRIGHT (1971).

All specimens studied showed a $2n = 52$ ($NF = 60$) karyotype with three distinctive pairs of medium- and small-sized metacentric autosomes, and 22 pairs of telocentrics decreasing gradually in size (see Fig.). Besides minimal variations in positioning of metacentric autosomes, this karyotype is similar both in diploid number, chromosomal morphology and lengths to those previously reported for *A. xanthorhinus*, *A. olivaceus*, *A. longipilis* (RODRIGUEZ et al. 1983), and *A. illuteus* (LIASCOVICH et al. 1989).

G-banded chromosomes were arm-to-arm compared with a banded karyotype of *A. olivaceus* (kindly provided by Dr. L. VIDAL-RIOJA from the Instituto Multidisciplinario de Biología Celular, La Plata, Argentina), showing entire similarity between banding patterns



Giemsa-stained karyotype of *Akodon andinus*; $2n = 52$, $NF = 60$

of both species. Similarly, whole G-band identity has also been reported for *A. xanthorhinus*, *A. olivaceus*, and *A. longipilis* from Chile (RODRIGUEZ et al. 1983), and *A. illuteus* and *A. longipilis* from Argentina (LIASCOVICH et al. 1989). These results strongly support the contention that speciation in the southern lineage of *Akodon* proceeded without chromosomal change from a generalized $2n = 52$ karyotype, which likely is the primitive condition for *Akodon* (REIG 1987). Although banding patterns had not been reported, the same $2n = 52$ karyotype has been described for *A. sanborni* and *A. jelski*, and the related genera *Chelemys* and *Geoxus* (PEARSON 1984).

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