

3. *Lophiomys Imhausi* A. Milne-Edwards.

By Prof. Henry H. Giglioli in Firenze.

The Florence Zoological Museum has recently received from Count Lodovico Marazzani a splendid specimen of this very rare and singular Rodent, one of the very best examples of »defensive mimicry« known in the animal Kingdom. Our specimen comes from a new locality, Erkanid on the Mountains between Suakin and Singat, where it was captured quite accidentally on the 12th of April last by a shot from a small revolver. It was also secured and preserved by mere chance, for it was found by a small terrier-dog and killed at the bottom of a deep fissure in the granitic rocks and its value was quite ignored by those who first handled it; thus the skeleton and viscera were lost, but happily the skin was in excellent condition and the skull had been left attached. It is an adult female and has four teats, two axillary and two inguinal; it is rather larger than the fine specimen at Genoa, but does not differ in colour or richness of fur. The luxuriant dorsal mane to which this creature owes its name is separated from the long hairs of the body by a narrow stripe of short stiff greenish bristles. The iris was dark brown, and the animal emanated no special odour.

This is the fourth specimen of *Lophiomys Imhausi* that has been secured to science. The first was the type specimen accidentally bought alive by M. Imhaus at Aden in 1866, and described by prof. A. Milne-Edwards; it is in the Paris Museum, skin, skeleton and viscera preserved. The second is the skull accidentally picked up by Dr. Schweinfurth at Maman, north of Kassala, and described in 1867 by Prof. Peters as *Phractomys aethiopicus*, it is I believe at Berlin. The third was accidentally killed by a blow on the head with a stick in the seriba of Beccari and Antinori at Keren in the Bogos country in 1870; the mounted skin and skeleton are in the Civic Museum at Genoa. The fourth is the subject of this note, its skin has been mounted and with the cranium forms an important item of the Florence Zoological Museum.

The Natives told Count Marazzani that the *Lophiomys* is rare, that it lives in deep holes in the strangely fissured rocks of that country and that it is a vegetable feeder; the stomach of my specimen was distended with leaves and young shoots.

The »habitat« of this species is now pretty well defined by lines drawn from Suakin to Maman and Kassala and thence southwards towards the Somali coast.

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