

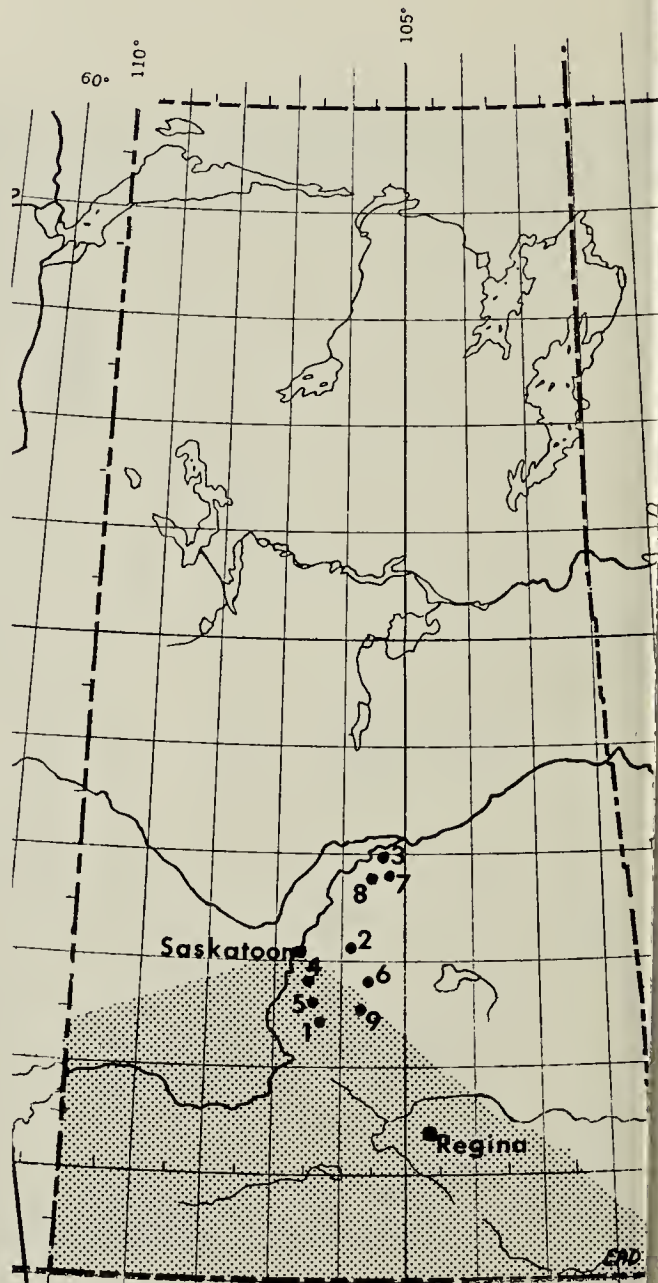
PROBABLE RANGE EXTENSION OF THE OLIVE-BACKED POCKET MOUSE IN SASKATCHEWAN

by HUGH C. SMITH*

The analysis of skeletal remains found in the pellets of hawks and owls has frequently been used to determine the foods of these birds. A by-product of such analysis is the occasional discovery of an animal that is new to an area.

While examining mammalian skeletal material recovered from pellets of Great Horned Owls, several mandibles of the Olive-backed Pocket Mouse (*Perognathus fasciatus*) were found. The pellets were collected from owl nest sites by Dr. C. S. Houston during May, 1969 and 1971. Identification was done by comparing the teeth with known specimens from the mammal collection in the Provincial Museum of Alberta and confirmed by Dr. John E. Storer, Curator of Earth Science, Provincial Museum of Alberta.

The nests were located in the vicinity of the following places (numbers refer to sites marked on map): (1) Bladworth, (2) Junction Highways 2 and 5, 40 miles east of Saskatoon, (3) 3 miles southwest of Birch Hills, (4) Blackstrap Reservoir, (5) southeast of Kenaston, (6) Watrous, (7) Meskanaw, (8) east of Yellow Creek, and (9) west of Simpson. Several of these locations fall within the known range of this mammal as reported by Nero^{2 3 4 5 6}. They are, however, new localities within this range. The occurrence at



Range of Olive-backed Pocket Mouse with additional records.

Birch Hills, Meskanaw, and Yellow Creek is unexpected and constitutes a range extension of approximately 100 miles northeast of the known range. The occurrence at Birch Hills also marks the northernmost record of a heteromyid rodent.

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The Olive-backed Pocket Mouse is a member of the Upper Sonoran Life Zone.⁸ It is usually associated with sandy soils of the grasslands, but may be found on the edge of the Aspen Parklands.¹ I am not familiar with these northern localities so I am not able to comment on the habitat occupied by these mice. Because the pellets were recovered from three nests at three separate locations during the nesting season, I assume that the mice came from a location close to the nest sites rather than being carried in from some distant point, and, therefore, constitute a valid range extension. The type of habitat used and density of mice in the area will have to wait on someone going into the area and doing a comprehensive survey.

- ¹BANFIELD, A. W. F. 1974. *Mammals of Canada*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- ²NERO, R. W. 1957. *The pocket mouse in Saskatchewan*. Blue Jay, 15:172-173.
- ³NERO, R. W. 1958. *Additional pocket mouse records*. Blue Jay, 16:176-179.
- ⁴NERO, R. W. 1959. *Some recent mammal records*. Blue Jay, 17:169.
- ⁵NERO, R. W. 1965. *Recent pocket mouse records for Saskatchewan*. Blue Jay, 23:36-38.
- ⁶NERO, R. W. 1965. *Three pocket mouse records*. Blue Jay, 23:173.
- ⁷RICHARDS, J. H. (ed.). 1969. *Atlas of Saskatchewan*. Published by the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.
- ⁸SOPER, J. D. 1964. *Mammals of Alberta*. Hamly Press, Edmonton.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN WILD FLOWERS

By. A. E. Porsild

Illustrated by Dagny Tande Lid.
National Museum of Natural Sciences,
National Museums of Canada and Parks
Canada,
Department of Indian and Northern Affairs,
Ottawa.
154 pp., 1974, \$5.00.

This volume is, as its author says, designed for the use of the visitor to Jasper, Banff and Waterton National Parks, to introduce him to the commoner and more spectacular wild flowers of the area, with emphasis on the alpine and subalpine zones (above and just below timberline). Of about 2,250 plants known to the author — and few will know more — from the national parks of the Alberta Rockies, 250 odd have here been illustrated and

described and some 180 more have been mentioned with field marks, but not illustrated. Besides visibly flowering plants a selection of ferns, conifers, rushes and even grasses and sedges have been treated.

A. E. Porsild, Curator Emeritus, National Herbarium of Canada, has been studying the northern, arctic and alpine flora for the last 45 years or more and has published widely upon this subject at both scientific and popular levels. His illustrator, Mrs. Dagny Tande Lid, contributed the drawings both for Hultén's monumental "Flora of Alaska" (1968) and Porsild's own "Flora of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago" (1957).

The pictures are in full colour, thus they must have begun as paintings. Almost all have come out in the printing true to life. (*Agoseris glauca* is shown with pink ligules; all material I've ever seen had yellow flowers.) From the scale given beside the pictures, one can estimate the size of the plant in life. With these illustrations it should be easy to recognize living material of the species shown. For this task, a good botanical drawing — as these are — is superior to a