MUS NOVÆ-HOLLANDIÆ, Waterh.

New Holland Field Mouse.

Mus Novæ-Hollandiæ, Waterh. in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part x. p. 146.—Gray, List of Mamm. in Coll. Brit. Mus., p. 112.

It is very generally believed that all, or nearly all, the Mammals of Australia are marsupial; but this is not the case; one order at least—the Rodentia—being as fairly represented in that country as in any other. Both rats and mice are in abundance, but they are specifically distinct from those of the northern hemisphere.

The Mus Novæ-Hollandiæ inhabits the plains and stony ridges of New South Wales, both in the districts between the mountain-ranges and the sea and in those of the interior. Mr. Waterhouse took his description of this species from an example collected at Yarrundi, on the Upper Hunter, and I have now before me additional specimens from the same district, and others collected on the banks of the river Gwydir, where they were procured by Mr. Gilbert. The animal described by Mr. Waterhouse was, I believe, somewhat immature; his measurements, therefore, will not answer for the adult, which is represented on the accompanying Plate of the natural size. I usually found this species among stones, or under flat slabs of bark, left by the aborigines at their encampments; but Mr. Gilbert states that, while travelling among the high grass in the neighbourhood of the Gwydir, he constantly started it from out of the fissures in the dry ground.

Mr. Waterhouse states, that it approaches most nearly to the *Mus sylvaticus* in form and colouring, but that the tail is considerably shorter than in that animal; he remarks that it also approaches that species in the form of the skull, but has the nasal portion shorter; the molar teeth are of the same structure, but apparently rather larger in proportion.

The fur is rather long and very soft; on the upper parts the hairs are of a deep grey, tipped with brownish-yellow; on the belly the hairs are of a paler grey next the skin, and white externally; the tarsi are rather long and slender; the tail is white beneath and dusky above.

The figures are of the size of life.