## MUS SORDIDUS, Gould.

Sordid Rat.

Mus sordidus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxv. p. 242. Dil-pea of the Aborigines of New South Wales.

Very fine examples of this robust and compact Rat were procured by the late Mr. Gilbert on the Darling Downs in New South Wales. At present these specimens are in my own collection, but when this work is completed, they will form part of the rich stores of natural history at the British Museum. Mr. Gilbert states that it is common on the plains, and is occasionally found on the banks of creeks, and adds, that it mostly feeds on the roots of stunted shrubs.

The Mus sordidus is nearly equal in size to the common Water Vole of England (Arvicola amphibius), but it is rather smaller than the Mus fuscipes of Australia. It is in every respect a true Mus: its incisor teeth, when compared with those of M. assimilis, are broad and less elongated, its hair also is coarser and more wiry. Its colouring is as follows:—

Head, all the upper surface, and flanks clothed with a mixture of black and brown hairs, the former hue prevailing along the centre of the back, and both nearly equal in amount on the flanks; whiskers black; under surface greyish buff; hind-feet silvery grey; fore-feet greyish brown; tail thinly clothed with extremely fine black hairs.

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The name of *sordidus* has been assigned to this animal from the dark colouring of its upper surface. The figures are of the natural size.