

## DENDROLAGUS URSINUS, Müll.

### Black Tree-Kangaroo.

*Dendrolagus ursinus*, Müll. Zoogd. van den Indischen Archipel., part iv. pl. 19; pl. 22. fig. 1, head; pl. 23. figs. 1-3, and pl. 24. fig. 1, skull; figs. 2 & 3, bones of hind-leg.—Gould, Mon. of Macropodidæ, pl. —  
Waterh. Nat. Hist. Mamm., vol. i. p. 185.—Gray, List of Mamm. in Coll. Brit. Mus., p. 87.

As an evidence of how little we know of the productions of New Guinea, and of the infrequency of our intercourse with that country, I may state, that, although twelve years have elapsed since the publication of the second part of my "Monograph of the Macropodidæ, or Family of Kangaroos," I have not been able to obtain any information respecting the history and habits of this singular animal beyond the meagre account there given, the substance of which I here repeat.

Both the *Dendrolagus ursinus* and the *D. imustus* are natives of New Guinea, where they inhabit the trees, and feed upon the bark and leaves of the smaller branches, fruits and berries. They were discovered in Triton Bay by Dr. M. S. Müller, who states that they also frequent the interior of the country: in all probability they are generally dispersed over the forests of that *terra incognita*. What a field for enterprise here presents itself to the notice of the scientific explorer!

The specimen from which my former illustration was taken, and which was then in the Royal Museum at Leyden, now forms part of the fine collection at the British Museum; the half-figure, of the size of life, on the accompanying Plate was also taken from the same example.

The following accurate description of this animal is transcribed from Mr. Waterhouse's "Natural History of the Mammalia," a work of great scientific value, which it is to be regretted has been discontinued for want of a due appreciation of its merits on the part of the public:—

"This animal has received the specific name of *ursinus*, no doubt on account of a certain superficial resemblance it has to a small Bear, arising in a great measure from the nature of its fur, which differs much from that of the ordinary Kangaroos, not only in being harsh and glossy, but in being composed of one kind of hair only; it would appear that that kind of hair which forms the chief clothing in the ordinary Kangaroos is here entirely, or almost entirely, wanting; and that the hairs representing the longer interspersed hairs in the fur of those animals, here forms the entire coat. With all the essential characters of the true Kangaroos, we find, in these tree-climbing animals, the limbs modified for their different mode of life: the long hind-legs of the Kangaroo proper are replaced by comparatively short legs, and the fore-legs are but little inferior in size to the posterior limbs; the strong fore-feet are armed with stout and long claws, compressed and much curved, and fitted for clinging to the inequalities of the bark of the trees. The enormously long tail no doubt helps to balance the animal whilst on the branches of the lofty trees which it ascends in quest of food.

"On the upper parts and sides of the body, as well as the limbs (excepting at the base internally), the fur is black and glossy, and very nearly uniform to the skin, an indistinct brownish hue being only observable at the roots of the hairs; tail densely clothed throughout, and black, but tinted with brown at the roots of the hairs; ears densely clothed with very long hairs which completely conceal them; the hairs springing from the top of the ears are brown, but the rest are black; the head in front of the ears and the whole of the under parts of the body are brown, but varying in intensity in parts, being darker round the eye and on the muzzle, and yellowish on the cheeks; the belly is also yellowish, whilst the chest assumes a deeper hue; the muffle appears as if naked, but has in fact very minute hairs scattered over it."