DASYURUS HALLUCATUS, Gould.

North Australian Dasyurus.

Dasyurus hallucatus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part x. p. 41.—Waterh. Nat. Hist. Mamm., vol. i. p. 434. Cat. of Mamm. in Brit. Mus., p. 98.

The small number of specimens of the Dasyurus hallucatus that have come under my notice renders it unsafe for me to affirm that it is or is not subject to the variations in colour which are observable in D. Viverrinus; but I have reason to believe that such is the case. All the examples that have yet been sent to Europe have been procured in the extreme northern portion of the Australian continent, and the greater number of them from the Port Essington Settlement on the Cobourg Peninsula.

Mr. Waterhouse having instituted a very careful examination and comparison of this animal with the other members of the genus, I cannot do better than give his remarks verbatim from his "Natural History of the Mammalia," above referred to.

"This is the smallest species of the true Dasyures, being a trifle less than D. Viverrinus or D. Geoffroyi; with the latter animal it might be confounded, having like it a thumb to the hind feet; upon a close examination, however, I discovered several characters by which it might be easily distinguished. It is of smaller size than D. Geoffroyi, of a darker colour; with the ears of a paler colour and clothed with pale hairs; the longer hairs which cover the root of the ear externally are whitish; the toes of the hind foot are longer, since I found them to be seven lines in length in hallucatus, and only six and a quarter in a specimen of Geoffroyi, which was of the same sex and of considerably larger size; and, lastly, I find the whole sole, both of the fore and hind feet in D. Geoffroyi, covered with minute but distinct fleshy tubercles, as is also the case in D. Viverrinus; while in D. hallucatus I could scarcely perceive a trace of tubercles; and the fleshy pads at the base of the toes and elsewhere, on which the tubercles were most distinct in Geoffroyi, are covered with numerous oblique or transverse grooves; the pads, moreover, at the base of the toes, were much narrower and proportionately longer."

"The fur is less dense and harsher than in D. Geoffroyi; the upper parts of the body dusky brown, inclining to black, but pretty freely pencilled with yellowish, and having numerous, irregular and moderate-sized white spots, which extend likewise on the sides of the body; on the crown of the head are a few very small white spots; the under parts of the body are white, but suffused with yellowish; most distinctly so about the throat; the cheeks, a large patch above the eye, and the sides of the body are greyish; ears pinkish flesh colour, thinly clothed with small pale-coloured hairs; immediately at the base externally the hairs are longer and dense, and of a yellowish white colour, and the part of the head immediately adjoining the root of the ear has similar pale hairs; the tail is immaculate, cylindrical, clothed throughout with longish harsh hairs, but by no means bushy; the basal third is brownish, but considerably pencilled with black, and the remaining two-thirds almost entirely black; the feet are brownish, and the region of the pouch is clothed with very dark red hairs appearing as if stained with blood."

The figures are of the natural size.