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DESCRIPTION

OF AN

APPARENTLY NEW SUBSPECIES
OF MARTEN

FROM THE

KENAI PENINSULA, ALASKA.

BY

D. G. ELLIOT, F.R.S.E.,

Curator of Department.



CHICAGO, U. S. A.

February, 1903.



DESCRIPTION OF AN APPARENTLY NEW SUBSPECIES OF
MARTEN FROM THE KENAI PENINSULA, ALASKA.

BY D. G. ELLIOT, F. R. S. E., ETC.

Mustela americana kenaiensis, subsp. nov.

Type locality. Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.

Gen. character. Size smaller than *M. a. actiosa*, with longer tail, shorter feet, and general color darker; audital bullæ large ridged, rectangular, longitudinally produced. Molars heavy; sagittal crest prominent; *no gular nor abdominal patches.*

Color. Upper parts tawny buff mixed with black, darkest on dorsal region, which part in one specimen is almost wholly black; top of head dark gray; forehead, top of nose and sides of head brownish white; sides of nose dark brown; chin and throat uniform dark ochre without spots, under parts darker than back, uniform dark chocolate brown, unguinal region paler, inclining to a pale buff, no spots on abdomen; upper part of fore legs on top chocolate brown, feet and under part black with a grayish white patch at base of toes beneath: hind legs and feet blackish above and below, with a chocolate patch at base of toes on top: tail black inclining to chocolate at base: ears brownish black externally, white internally and on edges: nails white.

Measurements. Total length, 790; tail, vertebrae, 293; hind foot, 90. (Dried skin.) Skull: occipito-nasal length, 79.5; Hensel, 75; zygomatic breadth, 50; least interorbital breadth, 18; mastoid breadth, 36.5; median length of nasals, 8; from posterior margin of palate to aveoli of incisors, 39.5; from anterior margin of foramen magnum to posterior margin of palate, 34.5; length of upper tooth row, 25; pterygoid fossa from hamular process to palatal arch, 12; length of audital bullæ, 17; width between audital bullæ posteriorly, 10; length of lower jaw, 55; height at condyle, 26; length of lower tooth row, 30.

Six specimens of the present race of marten were received from the Kenai Peninsula, and at once attracted attention by their dark color and absence of gular and abdominal markings on the majority, so characteristic of all known forms of this genus. Of

the six, four are entirely lacking beneath in ochraceous or yellowish markings of any kind; one of the two remaining has a diamond shaped yellowish white spot on the throat, and one smaller spot on the breast, rest of under parts being a uniform chocolate brown; the other specimen has a dark buff line on one side of the throat going to the breast and passing half way across the latter, the rest of under parts being a uniform dark chocolate brown. From *M. a. caurina* the present race differs in its paler head and entirely differently colored under parts, and from *M. a. actuosa* it can be distinguished by the characters given above. *M. a. kenaiensis* is a very dark race with a pale head, nominally without buff or ochraceous markings on the under parts and a long tail. I sent two specimens, the type and one of the examples with buff on the throat, to Mr. S. N. Rhoads, who has lately written a review of the North American martens, requesting him to compare them with the series of these animals in the Philadelphia Academy's collection, and the following are some of his comments kindly forwarded to me:

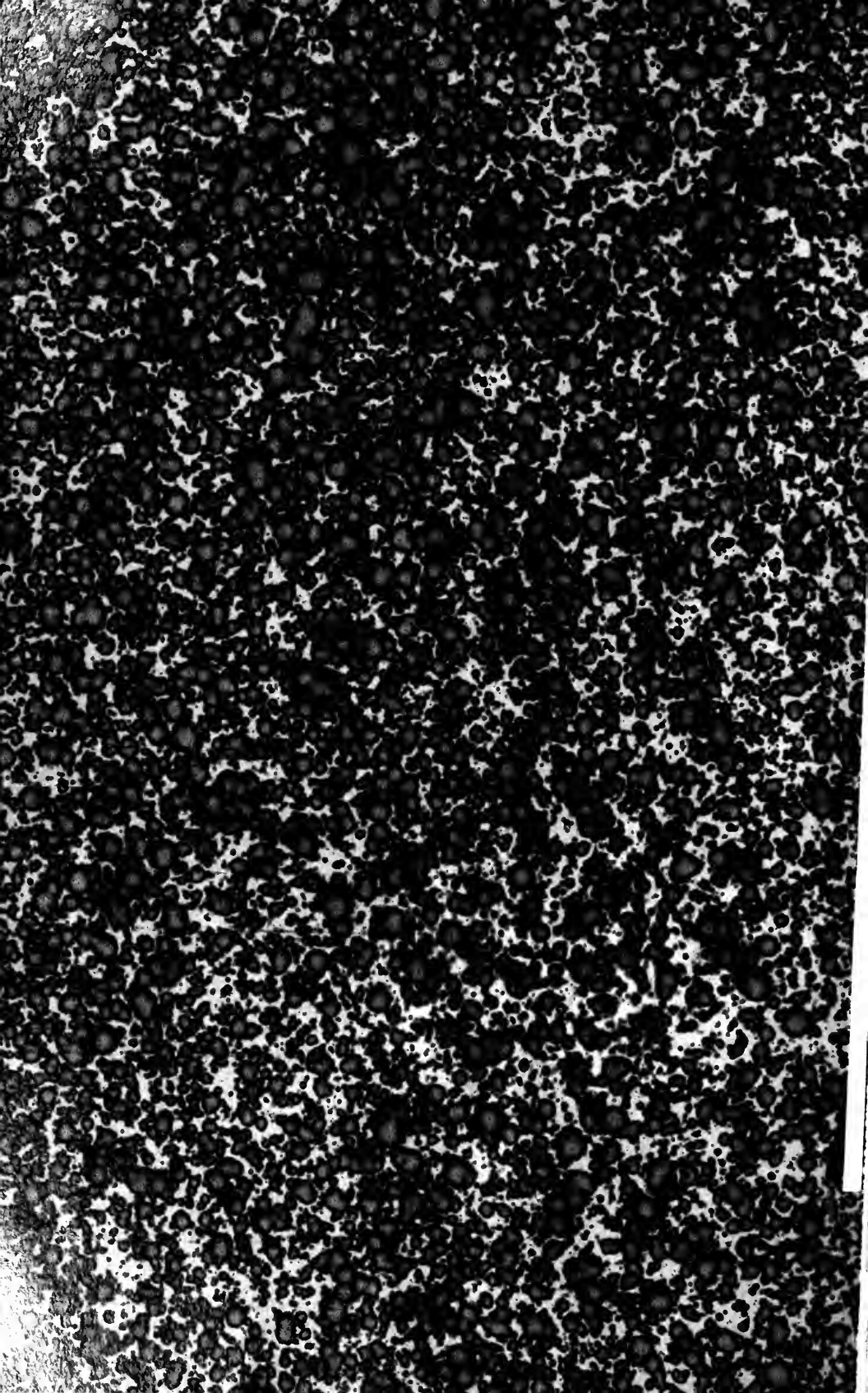
“*Color characters.* Much darker and richer and more buffy than *actuosa*. Upper body colors of brownish specimen quite like *caurina*, but head paler and lower parts decidedly different, being darker, lacking medium abdominal streak and large gular and pectoral patches of *caurina*. Lack of gular patches in one specimen (the present type), unique so far as I have observed in any species of New or Old World martens. Tail, feet and legs showing greater *contracted* blackness throughout than any other. Color relationship to *abietinoides* most remote to any species examined; nearest to *brumalis* but hardly as dark, viz.: less chocolate.

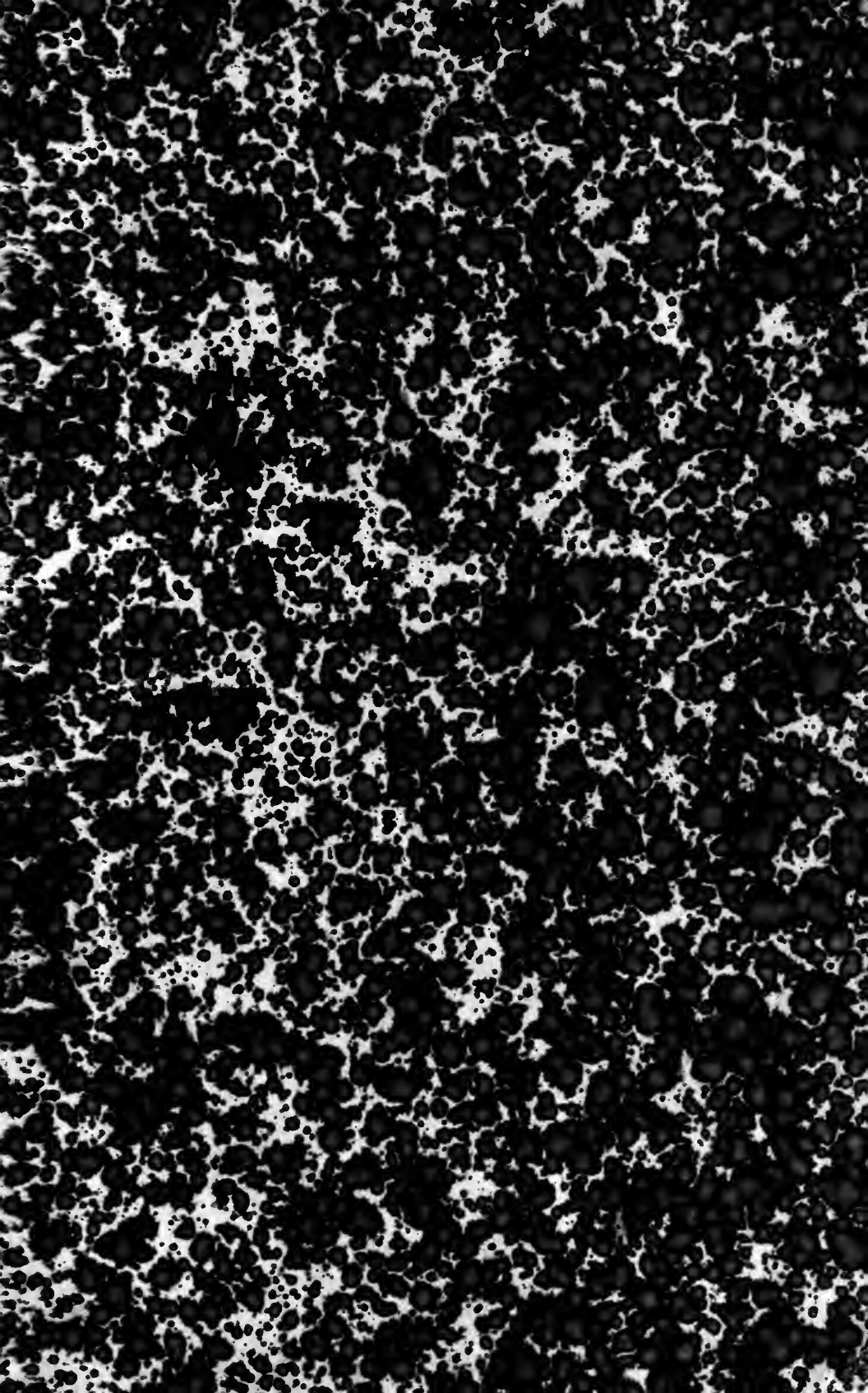
“*Size characters.* Smaller than North Alaskan *actuosa* (typical), with relatively longer tail. Skulls average considerably smaller than those of *actuosa* of same apparent ages, and are smaller than *brumalis*. I should say,” he concludes, “that your Kenai martens were a smaller, darker race of *americana* than *actuosa*, producing on the Pacific coast most of the peculiarities of the Atlantic coast *brumalis*, but separated therefrom by a vast region tenanted solely by *M. a. actuosa*.”



MUSTELA AMERICANA KENAIENSIS.
Nat. size.

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