1895

LII.—*On a Genus of Frogs peculiar to Madagascar.*

By G. A. Boulenger, F.R.S.

I have hitherto associated with *Rana* a number of species previously referred to *Limnodytes* or *Hylorana*, a group of frogs which they closely resemble externally, but from which they differ in a character first pointed out by Peters in other Batrachians of the same family, viz. the presence of an additional ossification between the distal and proximal phalanges—the existence of which I was not aware of at the time I published my 'Catalogue' in 1882. As these frogs cannot be referred to the genus *Rhacophorus*, on account of their T-shaped distal phalanges, I propose to establish for them a new genus, to be named *Mantidactylus*. Many of the species possess, at least in the male sex, the curious femoral glands to which I have previously called attention.

This genus contains numerous species, of which a list is appended.

Mantidactylus.

Pupil horizontal. Tongue free and deeply notched behind. Vomerine teeth. Tympanum distinct or hidden. Fingers free; toes webbed; tips of fingers and toes dilated into small disks. Outer metatarsals separated by web. Omosternum and sternum with a bony style. A small ossification between the proximal phalanx and the distal, which is T-shaped.

Madagascar.

1. *M. guttulatus*, Blgr. 1881.
2. *M. ulcerosus*, Bttgr. 1880.
3. *M. curtus*, Blgr. 1882.
4. *M. betsileanus*, Blgr. 1882.
5. *M. biporus*, Blgr. 1889.
6. *M. redimitus*, Blgr. 1889.
7. *M. flavicrus*, Blgr. 1889.
8. *M. lugubris*, A. Dum. 1853 (*femoralis*, Blgr. 1882).
9. *M. albofrenatus*, F. Müll. 1892.
10. *M. Cowanii*, Blgr. 1882.
11. *M. inaudax*, Peracca, 1893.
12. *M. opiparis*, Peracca, 1893.
13. *M. arumnalis*, Peracca, 1893.
14. *M. pliciferus*, Blgr. 1882.
15. *M. asper*, Blgr. 1882.

The genus *Rana* is represented in Madagascar by *R. labrosa*, Cope, *R. mascareniensis*, D. & B., and *R. madagascariensis*, A. Dum.

LIII.—*On the Representatives of* Putorius ermineus *in Algeria and Ferghana.*

By Oldfield Thomas.

While investigating the constancy of the markings and other characters of *Putorius ermineus* for comparison with the newly discovered *P. hibernicus* *, the differences presented by certain representatives of the species found on the southern and eastern outskirts of its Old-World range have appeared to me worthy of notice.

One of the forms to be considered is from Algeria and the other from Ferghana, Central Asia; and both show a marked reduction in size as compared with typical individuals of the species from Northern Europe, a fact instructive in its bearing on the question as to what is the real centre of distribution of this widely spread animal. But curiously enough, contrary to the usual rule, the southern (Algerian) form is characterized by a particularly short tail, while elsewhere, even in the Arctic Regions, the tail is always long. That from Ferghana, on the other hand, has the normal proportions of the species, although combined with reduction in size and a coloration apparently due to desert influences.

As tending to oppose the generally received ideas on the relative value of size and proportions as against that of colour-markings, special attention may be drawn to the constancy of the distribution of the markings of *P. ermineus* amid all the variations found in size, proportions, and actual shades of colour.

Putorius ermineus algiricus, subsp. n.

Decidedly smaller than in *typicus*, with a shorter tail. Colour of back with a much stronger fulvous suffusion, and of belly more markedly sulphur-yellow. Distribution of colours quite as in *typicus*. Upper lip and chin and edge of ears white. Yellow colour of belly running down inner sides of hind limbs on to the digits, leaving the outer halves of the metatarsals brown.

Skull small and slender, with a particularly low and narrow brain-case.

Dimensions of type (an adult female skin) :—

Head and body 205 millim.; tail, without hairs 52, with hairs 76; hind foot 31·5.

Skull: length from gnathion to upper edge of foramen magnum 39; zygomatic breadth 19·8; interorbital breadth 9; breadth of brain-case 18; height of brain-case above level of

* Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist., Apr. 1895, p. 374.