

Biological Notes

A FURTHER NOTE ON SCAEVOLA.—The recent note by Mr. Fred B. Jones ("Scaevola Plumieri (L.) Vahl (Goodeniaceae): Species, Genus, and Family New to Texas"—THIS JOURNAL 25¹:32-3, Ja57) recalled to my mind another collection of this species from Texas. Mr. Jones' specimens were collected Dec. 15, 1954, on Padre Island, Kleberg County. Professor B. C. Tharp also found it on Padre Island (not further localized) on Dec. 3, 1928 (no. 5536). The specimen was submitted to us for determination, and I reported the name to Professor Tharp at the University of Texas, mentioning that it was a new record for Texas. This is just one of a number of new records for Texas that I have intended publishing and never got around to.—C. V. Morton, U.S. National Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

CALLANA, PLANT COLLECTOR IN EARLY TEXAS: A NOTE AND AN INQUIRY.—For several years, the undersigned has been seeking information regarding one "Mr. Callana," whom Torrey & Gray, in their *Flora of North America*, volume 2, mention as collector of certain plants in Texas. His activities seem to have been slight, as the authors mention him only twice: as collector of their *Erigeron scaposum* DC. and *Palafoxia Hookeriana* T. & G. var. *subradiata* T. & G. In neither case is a spot-locality indicated, so I have no idea as to where in Texas he collected. It must have been before 1841, for the former species is described at p. 170 [printed in May, 1841], while the latter species is found at p. 368 [printed in April, 1842]. Both specimens were seen by the describers. Recently I have checked over the original 1850 and 1860 U.S. Census sheets for Texas, in order to see whether he was included, but with negative results. Nor is there any paper (or papers) by Callana listed in the Royal Society catalogue of scientific papers; nor have I been able to find him listed in any of the biographical dictionaries. I shall be glad for any information regarding Mr. Callana.—S. W. Geiser

THE RINGTAIL CAT, *BASSARISCUS ASTUTUS*, IN DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS.—I am indebted to Mr. Pierre Fontaine, Director of the Dallas Zoo, for pointing out to me recently that the ringtail cat, *Bassariscus astutus* (probably *flavus* Rhoads), should be added to my list of mammals known to occur in Dallas County (*Field & Lab.*, 24:96-101, 1956).

Although I have neither seen nor collected a specimen of this species, Mr. Fontaine assures me that during the past few years he has trapped several of these animals within the area of the zoo itself, in the western part of the City of Dallas. He has several of these animals on exhibition at the present time. The addition of this species to my list now brings to 30 the number of species recorded for Dallas County.—William B. Stallcup

DIANTHERA AMERICANA L. var. *subcoriacea* (Fernald) Shinnery, comb. nov.—*Justicia americana* (L.) Vahl var. *subcoriacea* Fernald, *Rhodora* 43:641. 1941. C. E. B. Bremekamp, in "Notes on the Acanthaceae of Java" (Verhandl. Koninkl. Nederlandsche Akad. Wetensch., Afd. Natuurk., 2de. Sec. Deel XLV, No. 2, p. 37, 1948), has this to say about *Justicia* and *Dianthera*: "Anderson's and Bentham's large and vaguely defined genera can no longer be upheld. *Justicia* will, as I will show elsewhere, have to be confined to...*J. hyssopifolia* L., and perhaps a few species occurring on the African continent, and *Dianthera*, which was based on *D. americana* L., is to be restricted to the latter and its nearest allies, an exclusively American group of swamp plants..." Acceptance of the careful definitions of the modern world-monographer of the Acanthaceae requires the above transfer. The variety is common in the prairie areas of central and northern Texas, west

locally to Taylor and Val Verde counties. Var. *americana* may reach the extreme southeastern part of the state, but I have seen no collections from Texas. The smaller related species, *D. lanceolata* (Chapm.) Small, is rather common in southeastern Texas and Louisiana. This is sometimes treated as a variety of *D. ovata* Walt. (*Justicia humilis* Michx.) of the Southeastern U.S.; though that has been credited to Texas, I have seen no specimens from west of the Mississippi River.—*Lloyd H. Shimmers*

MAMMALS OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION. William Henry Burt. University of Michigan Press, 1957; cloth, \$4.75. (Pp. xv + 246, 3 tables, 54 numbered figures, and other illustrations.)

This volume is a revision of Burt's (1948) *The Mammals of Michigan*, expanded to include the area surrounding the Great Lakes; so that now we have accounts of the 77 species of wild animals that now live, or have recently lived, in this area.

Burt's Introduction discusses briefly the faunal position of the Great Lakes region, the faunal relationships within that area, the economic importance of its mammals, and their adaptations for various habits of life.

The mammals are here placed in their proper subclass, orders, families, genera, and species. In most instances subspecies have not been included—wisely, I believe. A common name is given for each species, followed by its scientific name and author. There is also a distribution-map for each species of the Great Lakes area, and a smaller map giving the range of the individual species in North America. Each species is diagnosed in a brief description which includes size, weight and characteristics of skin and skull. The habits of the animal are described, and habitats and economic importance are noted.

In the last section of the book are chapters on the collection and preparation of specimens, and also a classification of the living mammals down to families. Two keys to the mammals of the area are given: one based on skin-characters and the other on skull-features. These keys are illustrated by diagrams, and clarified by a glossary of terms. Tables give dental formulae, summaries of measurements, and life-history data.

Burt states that his purpose in this book is to summarize our knowledge of the habits, life-histories, economic importance, and distribution of the mammals of the area, and to encourage research on mammals among his readers. In my opinion, these purposes are adequately fulfilled.

The book is well done: the data are presented in a concise manner, the composition and presswork excellent, and the illustrations clear. While its value to experienced mammalogists is not notable, it should be of great value to high-school and college students, as well as to the beginning mammalogist and amateur naturalist. Sportsmen and nature-lovers should find this book both interesting and useful. Much of the information presented applies to mammals in general, and thus this work should be of interest and value even in areas outside that specifically covered.—WILLIAM B. STALLCUP