

Jerboas, or Leaping Mice.

The jerboa is a small rodent, or gnawer, with very long hind legs and diminutive fore ones, and is the principal representative in the Old World of the rodent sub-family *dipodidae*. Its general form and habits have some striking resemblance to a bird's. His body, like that of a bird, is supported on two long legs, and, in both, the length of the leg is caused by the excessive prolongation of that part of the foot called the tarsus or metatarsus, so that, when standing, the heel is elevated much above the ground. The bones of the metatarsus, which are normally fine among the vertebrata, are, in this instance, reduced to three, and occasionally to one single bone in that part of the foot that extends from the heel to the toes. The folded fore legs of the jerboas are as unnoticeable as the folded wings of a bird, and its skull is large and spare.

These resemblances might be greatly increased, but though they are very curious they are merely accidental, and do not at all prove that the jerboas are related to the bird family.

The jerboa has a large head, ending in a little muzzle, long moustache, enormous soft black eyes, and long sharp ears. His tail is long and cylindrical, enlarged at the end, so that it can be used, like the kangaroo's, to support the body while jumping, and has a little tuft of black hairs tipped with white. The foot is protected under the toes by elastic cushions of flesh covered with stiff bristles. The body is generally about the size of a rat, but in one species found in Middle Africa, the *Pedetes cafer*, or jumping hare, the body is as large as a rabbit. The fur is soft and fine, a charming fawn color above and underneath a brilliant white. These little animals belong almost exclusively to the Old World, and are found in the deserts of Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. One single species is known in America as the *Jaculus hudsonianus*, or jumping mouse, as it is popularly called. It is found as far north as latitude 61°; its body is about five inches in length, its tail a little longer, ending in a hairy tuft, its color is reddish brown, shading into white beneath the body.

There are two species found in Algeria; the Egyptian is the most common, and is represented in our illustration; the other species, the "Dipus hertipes," is rare, and inhabits the extreme southern part of the desert of Sahara; it is smaller, and its fur is more fine and white than the former species, the Egyptian jerboa, which may be taken as a type of this whole family. Its ears are two-thirds as long as its head; its stiff moustaches and the tufts of hair on its tail are brown at the base and white at the tip. They live in colonies, and dig deep, far-spreading burrows in the ground. They are very timid animals, and is only possible to catch them at that season of the year when the female bears her young. At that time, like the rabbits and other burrowing animals, she leaves the common burrows, and digs a new, isolated one for herself, where she can make her nest out of old rags and leaves. They make very pleasant pets; they are bright and lively, perfectly gentle, and very affectionate. But they are delicate, and it is difficult to keep them alive even in warm climates. They are clean and intelligent. The jerboa moves very rapidly, and in its native

deserts even those swift dogs, the songhis, that catch the hare and the gazelle, cannot overtake it. It escapes pursuit as much by the irregularity of its course as by its quickness.

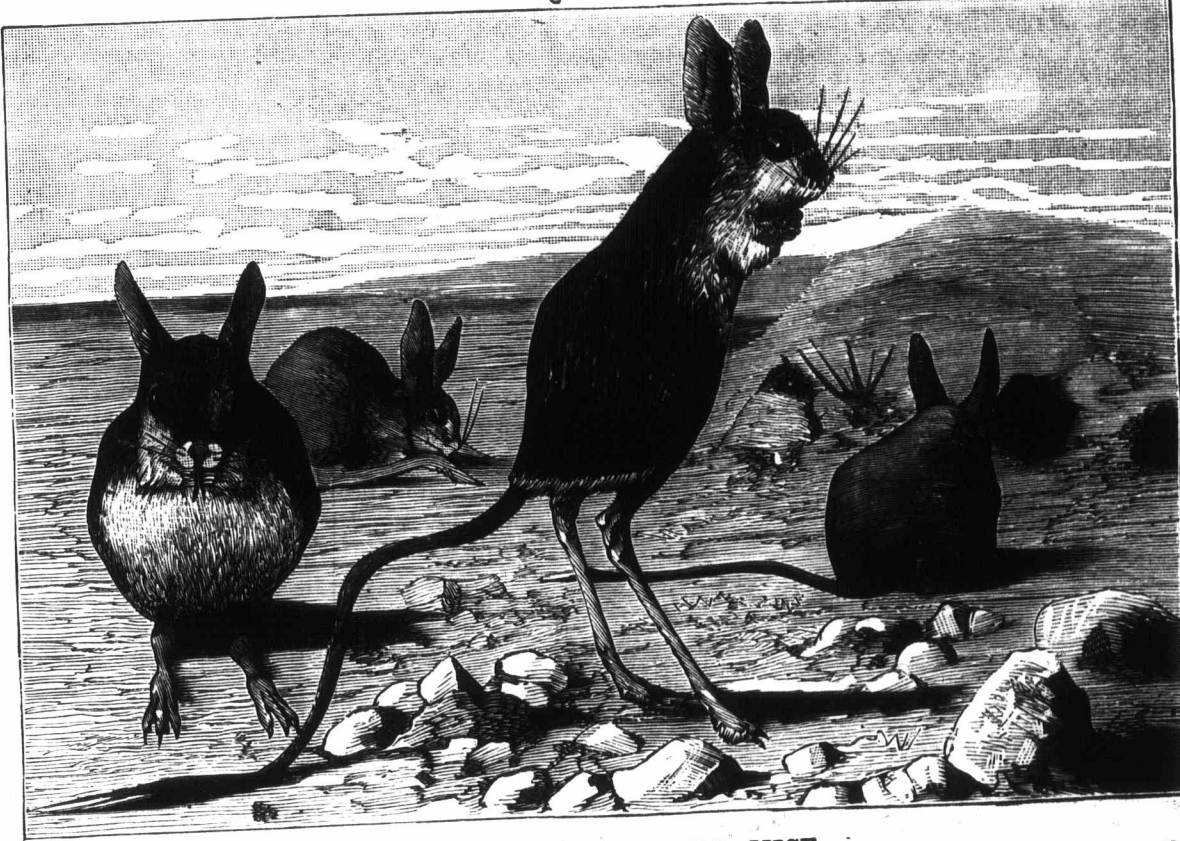
The dog jumps on it, and it suddenly springs to one side, and before the dog can recover, is already a dozen miles away to the right or left.

In all circumstances, whether springing or peacefully walking, the jerboa only uses its two strong hind legs; the fore legs are folded under its chin, and cannot be distinguished without careful observation. They are only used to convey its food to the mouth. — La Nature.

Billy Grimes, the Drover.

"To-morrow, ma, I'm sweet sixteen,
And Billy Grimes, the drover,
Has popped the question to me, ma,
And wants to be my lover;
To-morrow morn, he says, mamma,
He's coming here quite early,
To take a pleasant walk with me
Across the fields of barley."

"You must not go, my gentle dear,
There's no use now a talking;
You shall not go across the field

**JERBOAS, OR LEAPING MICE.**

With Billy Grimes a-walking,
To think of this presumption, too,
The dirty, ugly drover!
I wonder where your pride has gone,
To think of such a lover!"

"Old Grimes is dead, you know, mamma,
And Billy is so lonely.
Besides, they say, to Grimes' estate,
That Billy is the only
Surviving heir to all that's left:
And that they say is nearly
A good ten thousand dollars, ma,
And quite six hundred nearly!"

"I did not hear, my daughter, dear,
Your last remark quite clearly,
But Billy is a clever lad,
And no doubt loves you dearly;
Remember, then, to-morrow morn,
To be up bright and early,
To take a pleasant walk with him
Across the field of barley!"

A father scolds his son for his numerous youthful errors: — "Really, father, you were once young. Did you never frolic?" "Never," said the father with a melancholy sigh; "when I was young I had no money, and when I became rich it was too late."

The Orang-Outang.

Mr. W. T. Hornaday, in the last volume of the "Proceedings of the American Association," gives some new and interesting information on the orangs of Borneo, the results of his own observations during a lengthened stay in that island. Leaving the *genus homo* out of the question, the orang-outang occupies the third place from the highest in the animal kingdom, the gorilla being first and the chimpanzee second. The most striking feature of the orang is its great size and general resemblance to man. The chest, arms and hands are especially human-like in the size and general outline. So far as Bornean species are concerned, Mr. Hornaday is certain that each individual differs as widely from his fellows and has as many facial peculiarities belonging to himself as can be found in the individuals of any unmixed race of human beings. The face of the more intelligent orangs are capable of a great variety of expression, and in some the exhibition of the various passions which are popularly supposed to belong to human beings alone is truly remarkable. Mr. Hornaday had in his possession in Borneo four young orangs. Three were dull and intractable, but the fourth was a perpetual wonder to both Europeans and the natives themselves. Mr. Hornaday had that little animal in his possession for four months, and for a number of weeks it lived

in the room with him, so that he watched it almost constantly. The expression of the face was highly intelligent, while the intellectual development of its forehead and entire cranium would have been quite alarming to any of the enemies of the theory of evolution. This specimen was a fine healthy male infant, from seven to eight months old, height 22½ inches, extent of arms 37 inches, weight 15½ lbs. He exhibited fully as much intelligence as any child under two years of age, with all the emotions of affection, dislike, anger, fear, cunning, playfulness, and even *envy*. When teased beyond endurance he would first whine piteously; but if continued he would throw himself upon the floor kicking and screaming,

and catching his breath as loudly and natural as any spoiled child. He was afraid of strangers as a rule, but decidedly attached to Mr. Hornaday and his Chinese servant. When alarmed at the presence of a large dog or other animal, he would shuffle up to Mr. Hornaday as fast as possible and climb with all haste into his arms. Whenever a cat happened to come near him, he would immediately grab it by the tail with the very same action and bright mischievous expression of countenance as we have all seen in human children. Male orangs are much given to fighting, and, like many roughs of the human species, they seem given to attacking each other's fingers with their teeth. Whenever Mr. Hornaday's baby orang became angry with him, it would, if possible, seize him by the wrist and draw his hand to his mouth until it could seize one of his fingers with its teeth; but while it would make a great feat to give him a terrible bite, it knew enough not to bite harder than he could comfortably endure. The nest of the orang-outang consists of a quantity of leafy branches broken off and piled loosely into the fork of a tree. He usually selects a small tree, and builds his nest in the top; he always builds his nest low down, often within 25 ft. of the ground, and seldom higher than 40 ft. It is usually 2 ft. in diameter and quite flat on the top. The branches are merely piled crosswise; in fact the orang builds a nest pre-