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## NEW LOCALITY RECORDS FOR *CROCIDURA MARIQUENSIS*

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The black musk shrew *Crocidura mariquensis* has not previously been recorded south of 25° S and west of 27° E in the Transvaal. Specimens have been collected at localities 24 26 DB (near the type locality), 26 27 AD (I Rautenbach pers. comm.), and at 26 27 DC in the Orange Free State (Lynch 1975). These localities have been plotted using the degree square locus system (Davis 1958).

On 22 November 1976, an adult female *C. mariquensis*, Transvaal Museum specimen TM 27185, was collected in the grain store at Bossies, Transvaal (26° 33'S/25° 37'E). A second specimen, an adult male, was found dead at Barberspan Nature Reserve (26° 33'S/25° 36'E) on 27 April 1977. The occurrence of *C. mariquensis* in the Barberspan area had been suspected for some months. Samples of barn owl (*Tyto alba*) pellets collected on 12 September 1976 and on 28 December

1976 at Barberspan Nature Reserve, contained *Crocidura* skulls that were tentatively identified as *C. mariquensis*.

The present records extend the known distribution of *C. mariquensis* some 150 km west and 200 km south of previous recorded localities. It is of interest to note that the rainy seasons of 1973/74, 1974/75 and 1975/76 were above average in the western Transvaal (rainfall at Barberspan of 897 mm, 931 mm and 959 mm respectively; mean rainfall = 540 mm over 14 years). *Crocidura mariquensis* occurs in moist habitats (N Dippenaar pers. comm.), and the present records may be linked to the increased moisture level of the general area during these three years.

I am grateful to E J Morley, who caught and kept the first *C. mariquensis* specimen, and to I Rautenbach and N Dippenaar for information on distribution and habitat of the species.

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