= Transandinomys =

Transandinomys is a genus of rodents in the tribe Oryzomyini of family Cricetidae . It includes two species ? T. bolivaris and T. talamancae ? found in forests from Honduras in Central America south and east to southwestern Ecuador and northwestern Venezuela in northern South America . Until 2006 , its members were included in the genus Oryzomys , but phylogenetic analysis showed that they are not closely related to the type species of that genus , and they have therefore been placed in a new genus . They may be most closely related to genera like Hylaeamys and Euryoryzomys , which contain very similar species . Both species of Transandinomys have had eventful taxonomic histories .

Transandinomys bolivaris and T. talamancae are medium @-@ sized , soft @-@ furred rice rats . The upperparts ? brownish in T. bolivaris and reddish in T. talamancae ? are much darker than the whitish underparts . Both species are characterized by very long vibrissae (whiskers) , but those of T. bolivaris are particularly long . In addition to whisker length and fur color , several other morphological differences distinguish the two , including the wider first upper molar in T. bolivaris . Species of Hylaeamys and Euryoryzomys also differ from Transandinomys in some details of the skull and teeth and have shorter whiskers . Species of Transandinomys live on the ground , are active during the night , eat both plant and animal matter , and construct nests of vegetation . Both are hosts to various external parasites . They are in no apparent danger of extinction and have been assessed as " Least Concern " in the IUCN Red List .

= = Taxonomy = =

The first species of Transandinomys to be scientifically described was T. talamancae , named as Oryzomys talamancae by Joel Asaph Allen in 1891 . Several other species were soon added to the genus Oryzomys , then more broadly defined than currently , that are now classified in Transandinomys , including Oryzomys bolivaris (now Transandinomys bolivaris) by Allen in 1901 . In his 1918 review of North American Oryzomys , Edward Alphonso Goldman placed Oryzomys talamancae and Oryzomys bombycinus (= T. bolivaris) each in their own group , but thought them closely related . In 1960 , O. talamancae was synonymized with " Oryzomys capito " (= Hylaeamys megacephalus) , but it has again been recognized as a separate species since 1983 . The species was reviewed by Guy Musser and Marina Williams in 1985 and again by Musser and colleagues in 1998 , who documented the diagnostic characters of the species , its synonyms , and its distribution . The 1998 study by Musser and colleagues also documented Oryzomys bolivaris as the correct name for the species previously known as Oryzomys bombycinus and reviewed that species .

In 2006 , Marcelo Weksler published a broad phylogenetic analysis of Oryzomyini , the tribe to which Oryzomys and related genera belong , using morphological data and DNA sequences from the IRBP gene . O. talamancae appeared within " clade B " , together with other species formerly associated with Oryzomys capito . Some analyses placed it closest to species now placed in Euryoryzomys or Nephelomys , but with low support . O. bolivaris was not included . Species of Oryzomys included in Weksler 's study did not cluster together in his results , but instead appeared dispersed across Oryzomyini , indicating that the genus was polyphyletic and should be split up . Later in the same year , Weksler , Alexandre Percequillo , and Robert Voss introduced ten new genera of Oryzomyini formerly placed in Oryzomys , including Transandinomys for Oryzomys talamancae and O. bolivaris , with the former as the type species . Transandinomys is now one of about thirty genera within Oryzomyini , a diverse group of well over a hundred species . Oryzomyini is one of several tribes within the subfamily Sigmodontinae of the family Cricetidae , which includes hundreds of other species of mainly small rodents , distributed chiefly in Eurasia and the Americas .

= = Description = =

Transandinomys species are medium @-@ sized , soft @-@ furred rice rats . They closely resemble other medium @-@ sized lowland forest rice rats , such as Hylaeamys and Euryoryzomys

from Amazonia and surrounding areas and Handleyomys alfaroi from Central America and northwestern South America . In general , Transandinomys are distinguished from those animals by their very long superciliary vibrissae (whiskers above the eyes) . Euryoryzomys species are in general slightly larger and Hylaeamys are about as large as Transandinomys , so that the only feature of external morphology that distinguishes the two genera is the length of the vibrissae . Handleyomys alfaroi is smaller than both species of Transandinomys , but juvenile Transandinomys may be confused with similarly colored adult H. alfaroi .

The fur is brownish (T. bolivaris) or reddish (T. talamancae) above and lighter below , appearing whitish , but the hairs on the underparts have gray bases . The snout is large . The mystacial (above the mouth) and superciliary vibrissae both extend to at least the back margin of the ears when laid back against the head , but are much longer in T. bolivaris . The pinna (external ear) is large . On the hindfeet , which are long and narrow , ungual tufts of hairs surround the bases of the toes . In T. bolivaris , the sole usually entirely lacks squamae (small , scale @-@ like structures) , but T. talamancae does have squamae on part of its sole . The claw of the first toe extends about to the middle of the first phalange of the second and that of the fifth toe extends nearly to the base of the second phalange of the fourth . The tail is at least about as long as the head and body , sometimes slightly longer . The tail is darker above than below in T. talamancae , but there may not be a difference in color in T. bolivaris . The tail appears naked , but is covered with fine hairs .