

***Dendrolagus scottae* n.sp. (Marsupialia: Macropodidae): a New Tree-kangaroo from Papua New Guinea**

TIM F. FLANNERY¹ & LESTER SERI²

¹Australian Museum,
PO Box A285, Sydney South, NSW 2000, Australia

²Division of Wildlife,
PO Box 6601, Boroko, Papua New Guinea

ABSTRACT. *Dendrolagus scottae* n.sp. inhabits mossy forest above 1,200 m on the North Coast Range, Papua New Guinea. Its total known habitat area is estimated at about 25-40 km². The species is gravely endangered, and its plight is symptomatic of that of many large mammals in Melanesia. *Dendrolagus scottae* differs from all other tree-kangaroos in its uniform blackish colouration, narrow but long dentary, shallow face, and wide P/3 with a large posterobuccal cusp. The combination of large cheekteeth but small masticatory muscles suggest that *D. scottae* n.sp. has a different feeding strategy to other tree-kangaroos. *Dendrolagus scottae* n.sp. and *D. dorianus* possess a number of features which are unique among near relatives. These include the presence of a greatly reduced superior lachrymal foramen, large cheekteeth, uniformly dark dorsal and ventral colouration, and a very short tail. These derived features indicate that these two species are each other's closest relatives.

FLANNERY, T.F. & L. SERI, 1990. *Dendrolagus scottae* n.sp. (Marsupialia: Macropodidae): a new tree-kangaroo from Papua New Guinea. Records of the Australian Museum 42(3): 237–245.

The tree-kangaroos (genus *Dendrolagus*) are the only arboreal members of the marsupial family Macropodidae, which also includes the more familiar terrestrial kangaroos and wallabies. Tree-kangaroos are restricted to the rainforests of both north-eastern Australia (two species) and New Guinea (seven species). The two Australian species and the New Guinean *Dendrolagus inustus* form a plesiomorphic group (Groves, 1982; Flannery & Szalay, 1982). *Dendrolagus inustus* is the only species previously reported from the North Coast Range. A group of specialised, highly arboreally-adapted species inhabits the New Guinean Central Cordillera and

some outlying ranges (Groves, 1982) (Fig.1). *Dendrolagus dorianus* is the most apomorphic member of this group. It is largely restricted to high-altitude mossy forests along the Central Cordillera, but one subspecies inhabits the Wondiwoi Peninsula of Irian Jaya. *Dendrolagus dorianus*, the largest previously-known species, is almost bear-like in its proportions, with fore- and hindlimbs subequal in length, a domed forehead and a very short tail. In addition to the living species, a very large extinct species (*Dendrolagus noibano*) is known from Pleistocene fossil remains from Chimbu Province Papua New Guinea (Flannery, Mountain & Aplin, 1983). It is dentally and