

**A New Species of *Pteralopex***  
**(Chiroptera: Pteropodidae)**  
**from Montane Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands**

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ABSTRACT. *Pteralopex pulchra* n.sp. is described. It is known from a single specimen collected at 1,230 m on the south slopes of Mount Makarakomburu, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. It is probably restricted to altitudes in excess of 1,200 m, where it possibly replaces *Pteralopex atrata* which is restricted to lower elevations. This species pair possibly forms the only example among Solomon Islands mammals of altitudinal replacement. The morphology of *P. pulchra* n.sp. is intermediate in some respects between that of the two previously known Solomon Islands species (*P. anceps* and *P. atrata*), and the Fijian *P. acrodonta*. *Pteralopex pulchra* n.sp. is unique however in the possession of extensively black and white mottled wings, bright red eyes and a yellowish venter which contrasts strongly with the blackish back.

FLANNERY, T.F., 1991. A new species of *Pteralopex* (Chiroptera: Pteropodidae) from Montane Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. Records of the Australian Museum 43(2): 123–129.

The first species of the genus *Pteralopex* to become known was *P. atrata*, described by Thomas (1888) who based his description upon material collected by C.W. Woodford at Aola, Guadalcanal Island, Solomons. These specimens were almost certainly collected near sea level as Woodford (1890) states that he was unable to penetrate far inland during his stay at Aola. In 1909 Anderson described a second and closely related species, *P. anceps* from Bougainville. Sanborn (1931) subsequently reported *P. atrata* from Santa Isabel (also known as Ysabel), while Phillips (1968) recorded *P. anceps* from Choiseul. Figure 1 shows the distribution of these species. The two species were considered to be distinct

until Laurie & Hill (1954), then Phillips (1968) treated *P. anceps* as a subspecies of *P. atrata*. In 1978 Hill & Beckon described a third species, *P. acrodonta*, from montane forests on Taveuni, Fiji. They also reconsidered the taxonomic status of the Solomon Island forms, and considered that there were good grounds for the recognition of two distinct species in these islands, *P. atrata* from Guadalcanal and Ysabel, and *P. anceps* from Bougainville and Choiseul.

The new species of *Pteralopex* described here was discovered during a survey of the mammals of the south-west Pacific region organised by the Australian Museum. It is based upon a single individual whose morphology