

VESPERTILIO SUBULATUS SAY, 1823: PROPOSED SUPPRESSION  
UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS (MAMMALIA, CHIROPTERA).  
Z.N.(S.) 1701

By Bryan P. Glass and Robert J. Baker (*Department of Zoology,  
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, U.S.A.*)

1. The purpose of this application is to request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *subulatus* Say, 1823, as published in the combination *Vespertilio subulatus* (James' account of Long's Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, 2 : 65), and thus to ensure that the specific name *Myotis yumanensis* H. Allen, 1864 (*Smithsonian Musc. Coll.* 7 (Publ. 165) : 58) is conserved.

2. In 1823 Say collected a specimen of a species of *Myotis* near the 104th meridian on the Arkansas River, and described it in his notes, using the species name *Vespertilio subulatus*. His description was published verbatim as a footnote in James' account of the expedition. Say did not state that the specimen was preserved; however, as far as is known, all of his natural history collections were deposited in the Philadelphia Museum (Peale's Museum) which was later destroyed by fire.

Pertinent parts of Say's description read as follows:

"... flew rapidly in various directions, over the surface of the creek. . . . Ears longer than broad, nearly as long as the head, hairy on the basal half, a little ventricose on the anterior edge, and extending near the eye; tragus elongated, subulate; the hair above blackish at base, tip dull cinereous; the interfemoral membrane hairy at base, the hairs unicolored, and a few also scattered over its surface, and along its edge, as well as that of the brachial membrane; hair beneath black, the tip yellowish white; hind feet rather long, a few setae extending over the nails; only a minute portion of the tail protrudes beyond the membrane. Total length 2 9-10 inches. tail 1 1-5."

3. The description of Say fits *M. yumanensis*, not *M. subulatus* (of Miller and G. M. Allen, *USMN Bull.* 144, 1928, and of later authors):

<i>M. yumanensis</i>	<i>M. subulatus</i>
Dorsum dull cinereous	Dorsum bright chestnut
Uropatagium hairy at base	Uropatagium naked at base
Hind feet long	Hind feet short
Setae over nails	No setae over nails
Flies close to water	Flies high

4. *Myotis yumanensis* is at present the only species of *Myotis* (other than the species currently referred to as *subulatus*) known from the vicinity of Say's type locality, but the recognition of *yumanensis* in this region dates only from 1957. Other western *Myotis* possibly occurring in the vicinity may be excluded on the basis of one or more characters listed by Say: *Myotis velifer*—ears not hairy on basal half, hairs not blackish at base, size much too large; *Myotis thysanodes*—ears too long and not hairy on basal half, fringed interfemoral

membrane, size much too large; *Myotis volans*—color brown, not dull cinereous, interfemoral membrane naked, size too large; *Myotis lucifugus*—color brown with burnished tips to hairs, not dull cinereous; *Myotis californicus*—color not dull cinereous, foot too small.

5. In 1855 Le Conte (*Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad.* : 435) applied the name *Vespertilio subulatus* Say to bats from his plantation in the tidewater country near Riceboro, Liberty County, Georgia. Miller and G. M. Allen (*USNM Bull.* 144 : 42, 1928) have indicated that Le Conte presumed that he had two species, to one of which he applied the name *M. subulatus* Say, but they presumed that all the specimens were actually *M. lucifugus*. Whatever the species actually was, it certainly was not the saxicolous species currently bearing the name *M. subulatus*, which is absent from the south eastern United States.

6. In 1864 Harrison Allen (*Smith Misc. Coll.* No. 165 : 51) applied Say's name to the eastern form of the long-eared bat, which usage was accepted until the revision of the genus by Miller and G. M. Allen (*USNM Bull.* 144, 1928) wherein they correctly rejected *M. subulatus* for the eastern long-eared *Myotis* in favor of the name *M. keeni* Merriam 1895, which is currently accepted, but erroneously applied the name *Myotis subulatus* Say to the form currently bearing the name. Miller and Allen (*op. cit.* p. 28) based this change, in part, on their imperfect knowledge of the bats known to occur in south eastern Colorado.

7. Identification of the species that Say had in hand when he wrote his description places in jeopardy the species name *yumanensis* which has stood unchallenged for 101 years. Such a change is not in keeping with the intent of the rules to promote stability.

8. The oldest species name available for the bat currently carrying the name *M. subulatus* Say is *leibi* published as *Vespertilio leibii* Audubon and Bachman, *Jour. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad.* (1) 8 : 124, 1842. Suppression of the name *subulatus* requires that the subspecies of this taxon be as follows:

*Myotis leibi leibi* Audubon and Bachman 1842, Type locality Erie County, Ohio.

*Myotis leibi ciliolabrum* H. Allen, 1893, Type locality Near Banner, Trego County, Kansas.

*Myotis leibi melanorhinus* Merriam 1890. Type locality Little Spring, North base of San Francisco Mountain, Coconino County, Arizona, Altitude 8,250 feet.

8. For the reasons listed above we now request the International Commission on Nomenclature:

(1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *subulatus* Say, 1823, used originally in the combination *Vespertilio subulatus*, for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy;

(2) to place the name *yumanensis* H. Allen, 1864, as published in the binomen *Vespertilio yumanensis* on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology; and

(3) to place the specific name *subulatus* Say, 1823, as published in the binomen *Vespertilio subulatus*, on the Official List of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.