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Raquel López-Antoñanzas, Pierre Mein. First detailed description of Hispanomys decedens (Rodentia) from the Middle Miocene of La Grive-Saint Alban (France). Swiss Journal of Geosciences, 2011, 104 (2), pp.345 - 353. <10.1007/s00015-011-0066-0>. <hal-01920848>

HAL Id: hal-01920848

<https://hal.science/hal-01920848v1>

Submitted on 17 Dec 2020

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**First detailed description of *Hispanomys decedens* (Schaub,
1925) (Rodentia) from the Middle Miocene of La Grive-Saint
Alban (France)**

**Première description détaillée d'*Hispanomys decedens*
(Schaub, 1925) (Rodentia) du Miocène moyen de La Grive-
Saint Alban (France)**

Running Title First description of *Hispanomys decedens*

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Abstract The material of *Hispanomys decedens* (Rodentia, Cricetodontinae) from La
Grive-Saint Alban (France) is described in detail for the first time. *Hispanomys*
decedens, which is one of the oldest species of the genus, shows the primitive character
states that are typical of the Aragonian congeneric species, such as the mesolophs and

labial cingula surrounding the upper molar valleys. The detailed examination of the teeth of *H. decedens* shows that this taxon is a good candidate ancestor for *H. aragonensis*.

Résumé Le matériel d'*Hispanomys decedens* (Rodentia, Cricetodontinae) de La Grive-Saint Alban (France) est décrit pour la première fois en détail. *Hispanomys decedens* est une des plus anciennes espèces du genre et montre des caractères primitifs typiques des espèces congénériques aragoniennes, tels que la présence de mésolophes et de cingulums labiaux sur les molaires supérieures. L'étude détaillée d'*Hispanomys decedens* montre que ce taxon est un bon candidat au titre d'ancêtre d'*H. aragonensis*.

Keywords *Hispanomys* · Cricetodontinae · La Grive-Saint Alban · France · Systematics

Mots clés *Hispanomys* · Cricetodontinae · La Grive-Saint Alban · France · Systématique

1 Introduction

La Grive-Saint-Alban is the name used to refer to various Upper Aragonian pits located on the territory of the municipality of Saint-Alban-de-Roche (Isère, France). These pits are constituted by fissures in limestones filled with fossiliferous siderolitic clays.

Remains of *Hispanomys* have only been recovered from La Grive L (quarry Lechartier), M (quarry Milliat), and P.B. (quarry Peyre et Beau, where a single m1 was found by P. M.). La Grive L has eight fissure-fillings numbered from L1 to L8, but the only

productive ones (from a palaeontological viewpoint) are L3, L5, L5', L6, and L7 (Mein and Ginsburg 2002).

In 1887, Depéret revealed the presence of two taxa of *Cricetodon* at La Grive Saint-Alban: *C. medium* and *C. rhodanicum* (Depéret 1887a, 1887b). In 1925, Schaub carried out a whole revision of the cricetine myomorph rodents. He included in the species *C. sansaniensis* Lartet, 1851 all the large-sized species of *Cricetodon* from Upper Aragonian localities: Sansan (Gers, France), La Grive Saint-Alban, various sites from the Swiss molasse, and the Steinberg (=Spitzberg) in the Nördlinger Ries, southern Germany. In this work, he synonymized *C. rhodanicum* with *C. sansaniensis* because these taxa could not be differentiated neither by the morphology nor by the size (Schaub 1925: 9). In addition, in the course of his revision of the material of *C. sansaniensis* housed in the Museum of Lyon, he noticed the presence of two morphotypes within the material of *C. sansaniensis* from La Grive Saint-Alban: the first, slightly larger and with less developed ectolophs corresponded to *C. sansaniensis*, whereas the smaller one, with better developed ectolophs, revealed a different variety (Schaub 1925: 13), which he named *Cricetodon sansaniensis* var. *decedens*.

Later on, this variety was raised to the species level (Schaub 1944: 454; Schaub 1947: 60). Mein and Freudenthal (1971: 19) introduced the subgenus *Hispanomys* for a handful of allegedly derived *Cricetodon*, such as *C. decedens*. This subgenus was elevated to the genus level by van de Weerd (1976: 106 *et seq.*). The holotype of *H. decedens*, which is a left maxillary fragment with M1 and M2, is housed in the MSNL (Schaub 1925). It seems that the original findings of *H. decedens* are not the fruits of the field works carried out by Depéret in the mid-XIXth century, but most likely of those carried out shortly later by Gaillard, which were taken up by Ennouchi in the beginning

of the XXth century. It is believed that Ennouchi worked in the “Carrière Lechartier” (called at that time “Carrière Chemin”) at the fissures L4, L5, L5’, and L7 (Ennouchi 1930). The remains of *H. decedens* are supposedly from a now empty fissure, which is located between the fissure L5 and L7 and that is called L5’.

Although *H. decedens* from La Grive-Saint Alban has been mainly found in the fissure-filling L5’, it has also been recorded in fissures L5, L7, as well as in La Grive M (Mein and Ginsburg 2002). Additional material of this species has been mentioned by Alba et al. (2006) and Casanovas-Vilar (2007) from various MN7/8 sites of the Can Mata series (Barcelona, Spain).

The other species of *Hispanomys* found in La Grive-Saint Alban is *H. bijugatus*, which has been recorded from fissures L3 and L5 and has been described in detail in López-Antoñanzas and Mein (2009).

Hispanomys decedens is to date the less-known species of *Hispanomys*. Actually, no complete description or photographs of this important material have been made available so far. Therefore, the aim of the present work is to offer a detailed description of this taxon, which has been neglected until now.

2 Material and methods

The systematic study presented below is based on the examination of original specimens of the MNCN, RUU, IPS, and FSL collections (see below for abbreviations), and data from the literature. We examined the following: original teeth of *Hispanomys bijugatus* and *H. decedens* from La Grive Saint-Alban (Isère, France), *H. mediterraneus* from the localities of Montredon (Hérault, France), Soblay (Ain, France), and Dionay

(Isère), *H. aguirrei* from Escobosa (Soria, Spain), *H. daamsi* from Can Missert (Barcelona, Spain), *H. dispectus* from Hostalets de Pierola and Castell de Barbera (Barcelona), *H. lavocati* from Hostalets de Pierola, *H. aragonensis* from Pedregueras 2A (Saragossa, Spain), *H. nombrevillae* from Molina de Aragón (Guadalajara, Spain), *H. peralensis* from Peralejos 4, Peralejos C, Peralejos D, Masía del Barbo 2A, and Masía del Barbo 2B (Teruel, Spain), *H. moralesi* from Batallones 1, Batallones 3, Batallones 5, and Batallones 10 (Madrid, Spain), *H. thaleri* from Can Llobateres (Barcelona), *H. freudenthali* from Puente Minero (Teruel), and *H. adroveri* from Casa del Acero (Murcia, Spain).

Measurements of the occlusal surface of the teeth (maximum length and maximum width) have been taken following the method of van de Weerd (1976) for all dental elements except for the second upper molars, for which the maximum length has been taken parallel to the labial side of the tooth. Measurements were obtained with a Nikon digital counter CM-6S measuring device (Table 1).

First, second and third lower molars are designed as m1, m2, and m3, respectively, whereas first, second and third upper molars as M1, M2, and M3. The terminology used in the tooth descriptions follows that of Freudenthal et al. (1994) and López-Antoñanzas et al. (2010).

Since de Bruijn et al. (1992), the biozones MN7 and MN8 have been grouped into a single unit MN7/8 due to the impossibility to distinguish them. However, Mein and Ginsburg (2002), based on the different species of *Democricetodon* recorded in the different fissure-fillings of La Grive-Saint Alban, were able to differentiate them in this area. They considered La Grive M and La Grive L3 as reference sites for the biozones MN7 and MN8 respectively, a conclusion with which López-Antoñanzas and Mein

(2009) agreed. Thus, in this work, we apply the biozonation given by Mein and Ginsburg (2002) for the fissure fillings of La Grive-Saint Alban.

Institutional Abbreviations

FSL Université Claude Bernard, Villeurbanne, France

IPS, Instituto Catalán de Paleontología, Sabadell, Spain

MNCN Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales-CSIC, Madrid, Spain

MSNL Centre de Conservation et d'Etude des Collections, Lyon, France

RUU Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht, Utrecht, The Netherlands

3 Systematic paleontology

Order Rodentia BOWDICH, 1821

Subfamily Cricetodontinae SCHAUB, 1925

Genus *Hispanomys* MEIN ET FREUDENTHAL, 1971

Species *Hispanomys decedens* (SCHAUB, 1925)

(Figs. 1, 2, 3)

Holotype - ML-Lgr 130: left maxillary fragment with M1 and M2 (Schaub 1925:

fig. 2, plate III)

Referred specimens - FSL67000, FSL67001, FSL67002, FSL67003, FSL67005,

FSL67006, FSL67100, FSL67103, FSL67105, FSL67106, FSL67107, FSL67118,

FSL67121, FSL67122, FSL67142 (mandibular ramus with m1-m3); FSL67004,

FSL67021, FSL67101, FSL67120 (mandibular ramus with m1-m2); FSL67098

(mandibular ramus with m2-m3); FSL67093-FSL67097, FSL67104 (isolated m1); FSL67047-FSL67052, FSL67060-FSL67065 (isolated m2); FSL67053-FSL67059, FSL67111 (isolated m3); FSL67007, FSL67009-FSL67011, FSL67046, FSL67110 (maxilla with M1-M3); FSL67008, FSL67109, FSL67112-FSL67117, FSL67119, FSL67123, FSL67124, FSL67126, FSL67129, FSL67134-FSL67140, FSL67143-FSL67147 (maxilla with M1-M2); FSL67125, FSL67128, FSL67130, FSL67141 (maxilla with M1); FSL67127 (maxilla with M2); FSL67012-FSL67017, FSL67022-FSL67045 (isolated M1); FSL67018-FSL67020, FSL67066-FSL67084 (isolated M2); FSL67085-FSL67092 (isolated M3). Measurements are given in Table 1 and Fig. 4

Type locality - La Grive-Saint Alban (fissure L5')

Age - Probably MN 7

Other localities - La Grive-Saint Alban (Carrière Milliat « M », Carrière Lechartier, fissures L5 and L7*), Isère, France (Mein and Ginsburg 2002); Hostalets de Pierola, Barcelona, Spain (Alba et al. 2006; Casanovas-Vilar 2007).

*All the three localities are very poor in remains of *H. decedens*. The extremely low proportion of this taxon in the fissure L7 has been considered to be possibly the result of "contamination" by Mein and Ginsburg (2002).

Extended diagnosis - *Hispanomys* species of medium size with low hypsodonty; having low values of the mean LM1/mean LM3 (=1.74) and mean Lm1/mean Lm3 (=1.16) ratios (third lower and upper molars not reduced); lower molars usually lacking the cingula on the lingual valleys; with some m1 having a double metalophulid or a short mesolophid or even both; three rooted m2 with a short, but distinct, mesolophid; m3 having a long or short, but distinct, mesolophid; M1 and M2 having labial cingula surrounding their valleys and usually having a mesoloph and an enamel-coated valley;

165 four-rooted M1 having one or two anterior cusps on the prelobe, with the anterior
166 ectoloph well developed, but lacking the forward paracone spur and usually having
167 prominent protostyles and entostyles; M2 with lingual anteroloph, having the
168 anterosinus usually open, but having sometimes anterior ectoloph and forward
169 paracone spur, less M2 than M1 with mesoloph and enamel-coated valley, and all of
170 them having well-developed backward paracone spur and posterior ectoloph; M3 with
171 distinct anteroloph and posteroloph and having backward paracone spur, but lacking the
172 anterior ectoloph, the forward paracone spur, and the posterior ectoloph.

173 *Differential diagnosis* - Differing from *Hispanomys daamsi*, *H. thaleri*, *H.*
174 *freudenthali* and *H. adroveri*, in being smaller; differing from *H. bijugatus*, *H. thaleri*,
175 *H. moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. baixasi*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in having strong
176 labial cingula surrounding the valleys on the M1; differing from *H. bijugatus*, *H.*
177 *aragonensis*, *H. thaleri*, *H. moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. baixasi*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H.*
178 *adroveri* in having strong labial cingula surrounding the valleys on the M2; differing
179 from *H. mediterraneus*, *H. moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in
180 having four-rooted M1; differing from *H. dispectus*, *H. thaleri*, *H. mediterraneus*, *H.*
181 *moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in having incomplete
182 ectolophs on the M1 and M2; differing from *H. castelnovi*, *H. bijugatus*, *H. daamsi*, *H.*
183 *aguirrei*, *H. nombrevillae*, *H. lavocati*, *H. mediterraneus*, *H. moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H.*
184 *freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in having an enamel-coated valley on many M1-M2;
185 differing from *H. castelnovi*, *H. bijugatus*, *H. nombrevillae*, *H. mediterraneus*, *H.*
186 *moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in having usually a mesoloph
187 on the M1; differing from *H. castelnovi*, *H. dispectus*, *H. nombrevillae*, *H. thaleri*, *H.*
188 *mediterraneus*, *H. moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in having

the M3 less reduced; differing from *H. moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in having labial anterolophid in all m1; differing from *H. castelnovi*, *H. daamsi*, *H. dispectus*, *H. thaleri*, *H. baixasi*, *H. aragonensis*, *H. moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in having a double metalophid on some m1; differing from *H. thaleri*, *H. nombrevillae*, and *H. aguirrei* in having three-rooted m2; differing from *H. nombrevillae*, *H. aguirrei*, *H. moralesi*, *H. peralensis*, *H. freudenthali*, and *H. adroveri* in having the m3 less reduced.

3. 1 Description

i: The incisor enamel bears in its labial side two feeble longitudinal ridges.

m1: The outline of these teeth in occlusal view is sub-rectangular, longer than wide, with its anterior part somewhat rounded and narrower than the posterior one. The lingual anterolophid is usually lacking, but in few specimens (e.g. FSL 67005) it is present, but weak. The labial anterolophid is long and prominent and can even reach the anterior side of the protoconid, closing thereby the protosinusid. The m1 have a double metalophid (e.g. FSL 67003, Fig. 1-d) or a short mesolophid (FSL 67005, FSL 67001, Figs. 1-a, 1-c). Some teeth clearly show both structures (e.g. FSL 67002, Fig. 1-b). Even when the mesolophid is lacking, there is a slight inflation at the end of the posterior arm of the protoconid. The hypolophid is transverse. A few teeth have an ectomesolophid (FSL 67000, Fig. 2). All the specimens have a labial cingulum surrounding the sinusid. This cingulum is constituted by the junction of two ridges: the first emerging from the posterior wall of the protoconid and the second from the anterior wall of the hypoconid. It can bear an ectostylid. Some m1 also show a thin, low ridge surrounding the lingual valley. The sinusid is antero-lingually directed. The posterolophid is short and

213 constricted behind the hypoconid; it does not reach the posterior wall of the entoconid.
214 These teeth are two-rooted.

215 m2: These teeth are rectangular in shape, though they are anteriorly and posteriorly
216 slightly rounded. They show a prominent labial anterolophid that reaches the
217 anterolabial side of the protoconid, closing thereby the protosinusid. The metalophulid
218 is anterolabially directed and the hypolophulid is transverse. The mesolophid is usually
219 short and ends free. The m2 have rarely lingual cingula surrounding the valleys (e.g.
220 FSL 67006), but all of them have strong labial cingula closing the sinusid. These
221 cingula are constituted by two ridges; the first (which is stronger) emerging from the
222 posterior wall of the protoconid and the second from the anterior wall of the hypoconid.
223 The sinusid is transverse. The posterolophid is short and constricted behind the
224 hypoconid; it does not reach the posterior side of the entoconid. The posterior root splits
225 into two and, therefore, these teeth are three-rooted. The posterolabial root is stronger
226 than the posterolingual one.

227 m3: The occlusal outline of these teeth is rounded, longer than wide, with its
228 posterior part narrower than the anterior one. They show a long and strong labial
229 anterolophid that connects with the anterior wall of the protoconid, closing the
230 protosinusid. The lingual anterolophid is absent. Most of the specimens have a short
231 mesolophid (FSL 67002, FSL 67003, Figs. 1-b, 1-d). However, 4 out of 27 have it long
232 (e.g. FSL 67001, FSL 67005, FSL 67054, FSL 67057 Figs 1-a, 1-c). From these, three
233 specimens (FSL 67001, FSL 67005, FSL 67054) have the mesolophid connected to the
234 anterior side of the entoconid. The posterosinusid and mesosinusid are open; there are
235 no lingual cingula surrounding the valleys. The sinusid is slightly posteriorly directed; it
236 may be partially closed by two ridges: the strongest emerges from the posterior wall of

the protoconid, whereas the other one comes out from the anterior wall of the hypoconid. The posterolophid is short and does not join the posterior wall of the entoconid. These teeth are three-rooted.

M1: These teeth show a pronounced groove between the two lobes of the anterocone. Most of the specimens show either a strong cusp (even two) in the prelobe or a low anterior ridge in front of the anterocone (e.g. Fig. 3-h). The anterolophule connects the lingual lobe of the anterocone with the protocone. The protosinus is closed by a large protostyle (Figs. 3-d, 3-h, 3-i, 3-l) or by a low and strong ridge (Fig. 3-a). The protolophule is anterolabially directed. The anterior ectoloph is well developed and ends free most of the time. It can be parallel to the longitudinal axis of the tooth or posterolingually directed. The forward paracone spur is usually absent. The long and strong backward paracone spur connects to the posterior ectoloph closing the mesosinus, but it ends free in some specimens. The backward paracone spur emerges at about the midpoint between the labial side of the tooth and the entoloph. Most of the specimens have a short or medium mesoloph. In some of them, the mesoloph connects labially to a lingual spur of the backward paracone spur that points towards the mesoloph (Fig. 3-l), isolating a circular valley (called enamel-coated valley), which disappears through wear. Otherwise these structures are too short to be connected (Fig. 3-h, 3-i, 3-k). The M1 of *Hispanomys decedens* have strong, low cingula surrounding the labial valleys; some of which bears a mesostyle. The anteriorly directed sinus is usually partially closed by a strong entostyle or by a ridge, which emerges from the hypocone towards the posteriolabial side of the protocone. Some specimens (e.g. FSL 67015, Figs. 3-i, 3-j) and FSL 67017 (Fig. 3-h) show a vertical ridge emerging from the posterior wall of the protocone towards the lingual side of the tooth (a sort of vestigial entomesoloph). In the

less worn specimens, it is possible to observe that both lingual and labial posterolophs are short, but distinct. These teeth are four-rooted.

M2: The outline of these teeth in occlusal view is sub-rectangular, longer than wide, with its posterior part somewhat rounded and narrower than the anterior one. They have quite developed lingual anteroloph and a small, but distinct, protosinus in the anterior margin of the teeth. The labial anteroloph is well developed. The anterosinus is usually open due to the absence of anterior ectoloph, forward paracone spur or both (e.g. Figs. 3-e, 3-g, 3-m). However, some of the M2 have the anterior ectoloph connected to the forward paracone spur, closing the anterosinus (e.g. Figs. 3-d, 3-f). The backward paracone spur is long and strong and usually reaches the posterior ectoloph (a small anterior ridge of the metacone) and, in so doing, entirely closes the mesosinus. Nevertheless, some specimens lack the posterior ectoloph and, therefore, have a backward paracone spur that ends free (e.g. Fig. 3-m) or the two crests are not connected (e.g. Fig. 3-f). All teeth have the mesosinus much larger than the anterosinus and they have a cingulum surrounding the main labial valley. A lesser number of M2 than M1 shows the mesoloph. When present, it is short or of medium length; in some specimens it reaches the backward paracone spur forming an enamel-coated valley (e.g. Fig. 3-m). The enamel-coated valley is formed by the connection of the mesoloph with a lingual spur emerging from the backward paracone spur. In some specimens, the mesoloph and the backward paracone spur are too short and, therefore, they are disconnected (Fig. 3-e). The presence of a mesoloph on the M2 is related to the presence of a mesoloph on the M1. Every M2 that lacks the mesoloph shows a slight inflation at the beginning of the anterior arm of the hypocone (Figs. 3-d, 3-f). The backward paracone spur is long and usually posterolabially oriented; in some specimens

(Fig. 3-d) it emerges practically at the midpoint of the protolophule. The protolophule is slightly oblique and anterolabially directed. The sinus is nearly closed by a low ridge that emerges from the anterior side of the hypocone towards the posterior side of the protocone. These teeth show short labial and lingual posterolophs. They have four roots.

M3: The outline of these teeth in occlusal view is rounded, longer than wide, with the posterior part narrower than the anterior one. The labial anteroloph is long; the lingual one is much less developed, but distinct (except in worn specimens). The anterior ectoloph and the forward paracone spur are lacking and the anterosinus is open. A true mesoloph is lacking in all M3 of *Hispanomys decedens*, but some show a small inflation corresponding to this ridge (Fig. 4-d). The teeth have a short, but distinct, posteroloph and a posterosinus. The well-developed backward paracone spur ends usually free due to the absence of the posterior ectoloph. The posterolabial side of the protocone generally has a strong ledge, which is directed towards the hypocone. This ledge closes the sinus partially. The sinus is directed backwards. These teeth are not reduced; actually, the value of the ratio mean LM1/mean LM3 of the teeth is very low (=1.736), one of the lowest ones obtained for any *Hispanomys* species known to date (López Antoñanzas and Mein 2009). These molars are three-rooted.

4 Discussion

In 1966, Freudenthal based on the cricetodontine material from the localities of Nombrevilla and Pedregueras 2C (Zaragoza, Spain) he studied to coin two new subspecies of *Cricetodon decedens* in addition to *C. decedens decedens*: *C. decedens aragonensis* and *C. decedens nombrevillae*. Later on, Mein and Freudenthal (1971: 19)

introduced the new subgenus *Hispanomys* and raised these subspecies to the species level.

Freudenthal's (1966) decision of regarding the two taxa as subspecies of *C. decedens* was the result of the lack of information available at that time about the "typical" *decedens* from La Grive-Saint Alban. Actually, Freudenthal (1966) did not discard the possibility that, once the material from La Grive-Saint Alban is studied in detail, one of the two subspecies he named could turn out to be a synonym of *decedens*. However, he thought more likely that the Spanish subspecies were different from the French one, a conclusion that the present work supports.

The detailed study of *Hispanomys decedens* from La Grive-Saint Alban shows that this taxon is, in fact, very different from *H. nombrevillae* and, even though it seems closely related to *H. aragonensis* from Pedregueras, both species can be easily differentiated (see below).

The main characters usually used to establish the evolutionary stage of the *Hispanomys* species are: 1) the different development of the ectolophs; 2) the degree of reduction of the mesolophs and mesolophids; 3) the presence or loss of labial anterolophids; 4) the presence or loss of cingular structures; 5) the acquisition or not of extra roots; 6) the degree of reduction of the third molars; and 7) the degree of hypsodonty (van de Weerd 1976; Agustí 1981, 1982, López-Antoñanzas and Mein 2009; López-Antoñanzas et al. 2010). The most archaic morphologies of *Hispanomys* would be characterized by having lower molars with well-developed labial anterolophids, lingual anterolophids, lingual cingula surrounding the valleys, two-rooted m2, and unreduced m3. Besides, the most primitive upper molars would be characterized by having mesolophs, labial cingula surrounding the valleys, quite

333 incomplete ectolophs, four-rooted M1, and unreduced M3 (van de Weerd, 1976; Agustí
334 1981, 1982; López-Antoñanzas and Mein 2009; López-Antoñanzas et al. 2010)

335 *H. decedens* and *H. aragonensis* share some primitive character states as the
336 presence of a mesoloph forming an enamel-coated valley on the M1 and M2 and the
337 presence of labial cingula surrounding the M1 as well as some derived ones like the
338 absence of a mesoloph on the M3 and the splited posterior root on the m2. However,
339 there are also differences between these species that makes *H. decedens* a reasonable
340 forerunner of *H. aragonensis*. In the latter species, there is a trend towards the decrease
341 in the proportion of M1 and M2 with the mesoloph and in that of M1 with either
342 anterior cingulum or anterostyle in the prelobe. Besides, another progressive character
343 distinguishing *H. aragonensis* from *H. decedens* is the lack of the labial cingulum
344 surrounding the valley on M2. Therefore, *H. aragonensis* shows a trend to lose archaic
345 characters so characteristic of *H. decedens*.

346 Moreover, if we compare the dental evolutionary stage of *Hispanomys decedens* and
347 the Upper Aragonian and Lower Vallesian species of *Hispanomys*, it appears that the
348 former shows a quite primitive morphology.

349 Thus, *Hispanomys decedens* is more primitive than *H. castelnovi*, *H. bijugatus*, *H.*
350 *aguirrei*, *H. daamsi*, *H. lavocati*, and *H. nombrevillae* in having well-developed
351 mesolophs on M1 and M2, which tend to form an enamel-coated valley. Well-
352 developed mesolophs are also present, but in much lesser proportion, in *H. thaleri* (a
353 few upper molars) and in *H. aragonensis*. Besides, *H. decedens* seems more primitive
354 than *H. castelnovi*, *H. bijugatus*, and *H. thaleri* in having strong cingula surrounding the
355 labial valleys of the first and second upper molars. Regarding the reduction of the third
356 molars, this taxon is also quite primitive: *H. decedens* appears more primitive than *H.*

castelnovi, *H. dispectus*, *H. nombrevillae*, and *H. thaleri* in having the M3 much less reduced (López-Antoñanzas et al., 2010, table 2). This character is shared with the other species of *Hispanomys* from La Grive-Saint Alban: *H. bijugatus*.

5 Conclusion

So far, *Hispanomys* includes 17 species with a stratigraphical distribution that encompasses nearly 10 m.y. Among them, ten taxa are known from the Upper Aragonian and Lower Vallesian: *Hispanomys castelnovi*, *H. decedens*, *H. bijugatus*, *H. aguirrei*, *H. daamsi*, *H. dispectus*, *H. thaleri*, *H. lavocati*, *H. nombrevillae*, and *H. aragonensis*.

Hispanomys decedens from La Grive-Saint Alban has most of the typically primitive dental characters of the Aragonian species of *Hispanomys*, such as the not reduced M3, the labial cingula surrounding the first and second molar valleys, and the presence of mesolophs on the upper molars forming an enamel-coated valley. This suggests that *H. decedens* is a quite primitive species with respect to the coeval congeneric taxa. In addition, the detailed study of *H. decedens* from La Grive-Saint Alban shows that this taxon could be an ancestor of *H. aragonensis*.

Acknowledgements J. van Dam and W. Wessels (Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht, Utrecht) kindly lent material of *Hispanomys* housed in their institution. L. Celià Gelabert and J. Galindo Torres (Instituto Catalán de Paleontología, Sabadell) allowed the examination of material under their care. Thanks to J. Prieto (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich) and an anonymous reviewer for having improved this work through critical

reading. Discussion with P. Peláez-Campomanes (Museo Nacional de Ciencias
Naturales-CSIC, Madrid) was much appreciated. This study has been partly founded by
research project CGL2008-05813-CO2-01 (MICINN, Spanish Government) conducted
by J. Morales. R.L.A. is currently supported by a Ramón y Cajal research contract.

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- 434

TABLE

Table 1. Length and width measurements (mm) of the lower and upper molars of *Hispanomys decedens* from La Grive-Saint Alban, Isère, France. Except for one m1 (from Carrière M) and two M3 (from Carrière L, fissure L7), all the specimens are supposed to come from fissure L5’.

Locality	Tooth type	LENGTH					WIDTH			
		min	mean	max	sd	N	min	mean	max	sd
La Grive-St Alban	m1	2.44	2.60	2.80	0.09	29	1.60	1.69	1.78	0.05
	M1	2.74	3.16	3.59	0.18	62	1.76	2.05	2.31	0.10
	m2	2.27	2.48	2.69	0.09	34	1.80	1.94	2.08	0.08
	M2	2.14	2.43	2.69	0.15	54	1.72	1.92	2.23	0.12
	m3	1.92	2.23	2.42	0.15	25	1.63	1.79	1.93	0.08
	M3	1.64	1.82	2.09	0.12	26	1.50	1.68	1.90	0.09

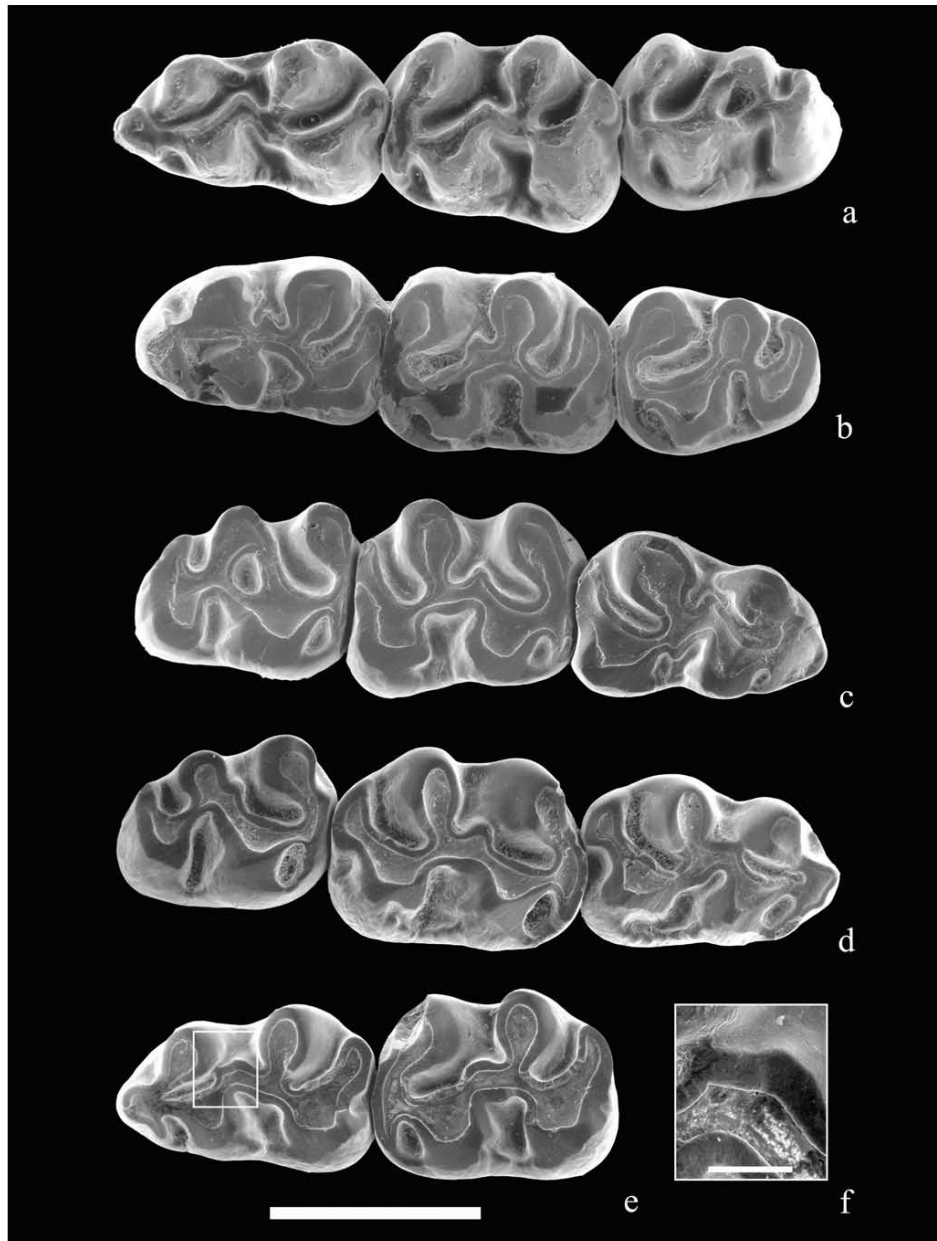
FIGURE LEGENDS

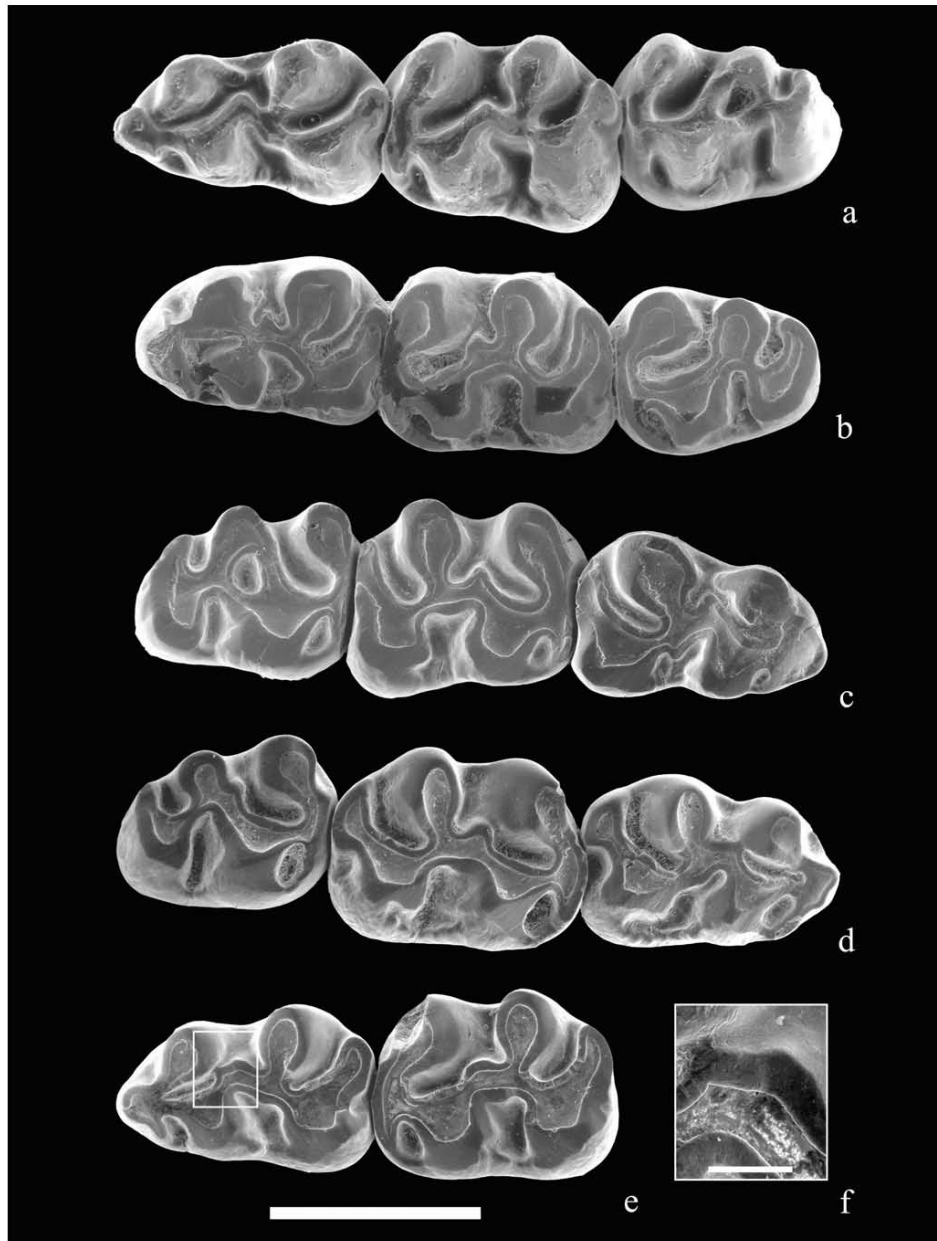
Fig. 1. Lower molars of *Hispanomys decedens* from La Grive Saint-Alban (fissure L5'). **a.** Left mandible with m1-m3 (FSL 67005). **b.** Left mandible with m1-m3 (FSL 67002). **c.** Right mandible with m1-m3 (FSL 67001). **d.** Right mandible with m1-m3 (FSL 67003). **e.** Left mandibular fragment with m1-m2 (FSL 67004). **f.** Close-up of the metalophulid II of specimen FSL 67004. Scale bar represents 2mm, except for f (200µm).

Fig. 2. *Hispanomys decedens* from La Grive Saint-Alban (fissure L5'). **a.** Left mandible with m1-m3 (FSL 67000). Scale bar represents 2mm. **b.** Close-up of the ectomesolophid of the m1 of specimen FSL 67000. Scale bar represents 500 µm.

Fig. 3. Upper molars of *Hispanomys decedens* from La Grive Saint-Alban (fissure L5'). **a.** Right maxilla with M1-M3 (FSL 67007). **b.** Close-up of the mesoloph of the M1 of specimen FSL 67007. **c.** Close-up of the mesoloph of the M2 of specimen FSL 67007. **d.** Left maxilla with M1-M3 (FSL 67009). **e.** Left M2 (FSL 67019). **f.** Left maxilla with M1-M3 (FSL 67011). **7.** Left M2 (FSL 67020). **g.** Left M1 (FSL 67012). **h.** Left M1 (FSL 67015). **i.** Close-up of the entomesoloph of specimen FSL 67015. **j.** Close-up of the mesoloph of specimen FSL 67015. **k.** Left M1 (FSL 67017). **l.** Left maxilla with M1-M2 (FSL 67008). Scale bar represents 2mm, except for b-c (300 µm) and j-k (500 µm).

467 Fig. 4. Length/width scatter diagrams of the upper and lower molars of *Hispanomys*
468 *decedens* and *H. bijugatus* from La Grive-Saint Alban (France).
469

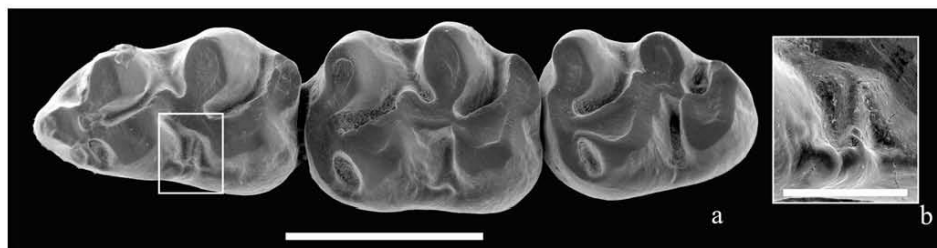




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472 Figure 1

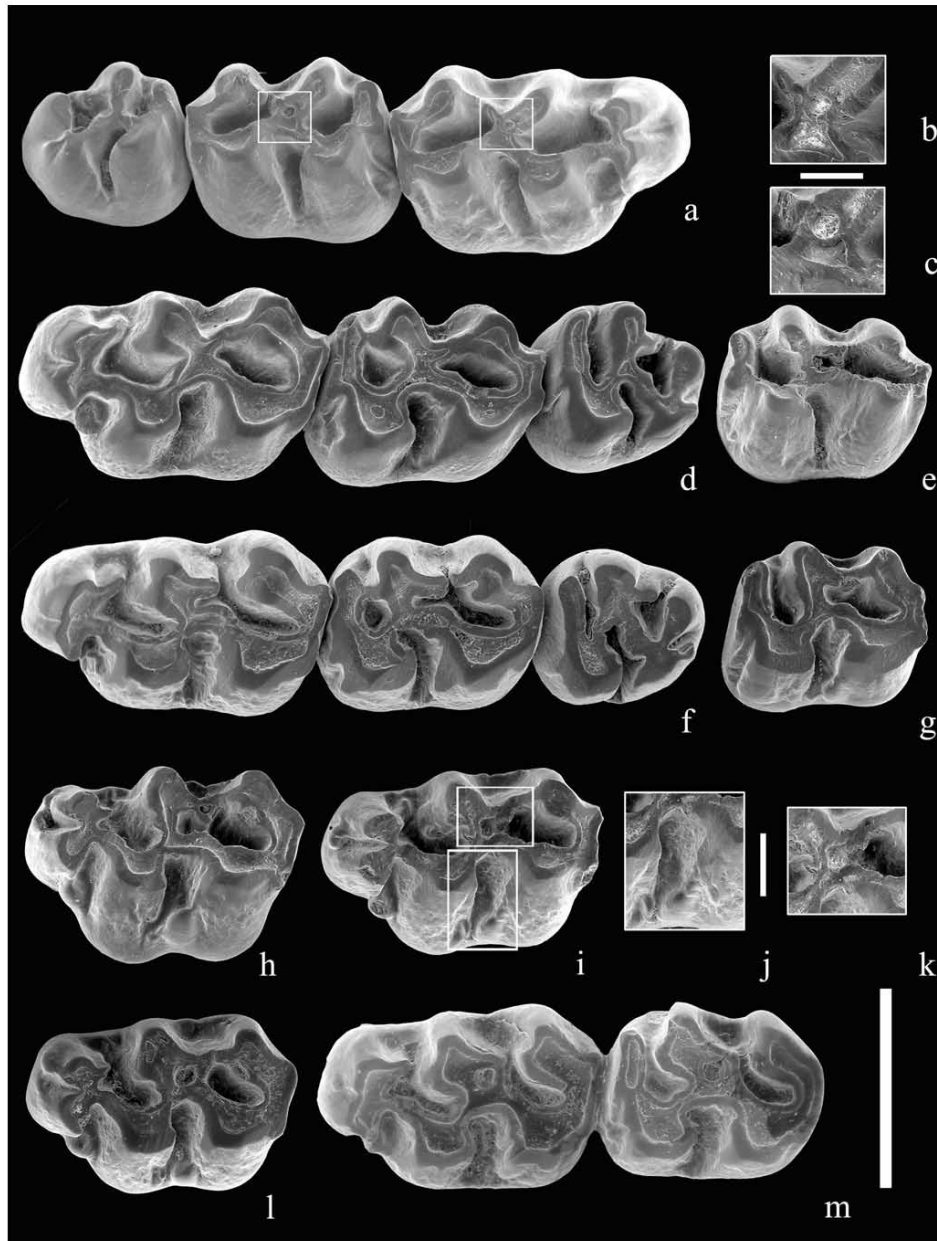
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475 Figure 2

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478 Figure 3

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