

**Mammals collected and illustrated by the
Baudin Expedition to Australia and Timor (1800-1804):
A review of the current taxonomy of specimens
in the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle de Paris and
the illustrations in the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle du Havre**

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Phoca proboscidea Péron, in Lesueur & Petit, 1816. King Island, Bass Strait, Tasmania, Australia. Charles-Alexandre Lesueur. Watercolour – 25 × 40 cm.
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ABSTRACT

The expedition commanded by the Frenchman Nicolas Thomas Baudin aboard the ships *Le Géographe* and *Le Naturaliste* (and *Le Casuarina* for the return journey) to the southern hemisphere between 1800-1804 collected specimens from numerous locations including the Canary Islands (Tenerife), Île de France (Mauritius), Cape Town (South Africa), Australia and Timor. Additionally, specimens were donated or purchased from locations not visited including the Comoros, Madagascar and Sumatra. Unfortunately, Baudin died at Île de France on the return trip so the responsibility of the account of the voyage was given to other members of the expedition. Responsibility for writing up the primary account of the voyage was granted to François Péron, who published the first volume of the narrative of the *Voyage de Découvertes aux Terres Australes* in 1807. Following his death in 1810, the second volume of the narrative was completed by Louis de Freycinet and published in 1816. The other four volumes of the *Voyage* included three atlases (the first by expedition artists Charles-Alexandre Lesueur and Nicolas-Martin Petit in 1807 and the second and third by Freycinet in 1811 and 1812), and a volume entitled *Navigation et Géographie* by Freycinet in 1815. Based on recent and on-going research, a review of many of the original documents is presented here, revealing hitherto unpublished details about who collected and donated mammals to the expedition. Research was conducted mainly in the collections of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle (MNHN) in Paris and their associated acquisition books. The Baudin expedition was responsible for an unprecedented collection of over 100 000 specimens of natural history, which remains the single largest collection of natural history specimens from Australia. A total of 101 mammal taxa relating to the Baudin expedition were identified during this study, which included 51 species described as a result of the expedition and 50 species that were described either before or subsequently, but not associated with the expedition. Of the taxa described, 20 species and three subspecies are currently recognised valid. During this study 43 museum specimens that were referable to 29 taxa were identified and at least five specimens seem to have been misplaced based on the information available. These specimens were derived from 24 holotypes, four paratypes, three syntypes, five lectotypes, and six paralectotypes and one topotype that are currently held at the MNHN. Some of these specimens are part of the estimated 51 mammals that were brought back alive to France on the boats. Charles-Alexandre Lesueur's illustrations complemented this study; of the 177 that are held at the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle du Havre, 149 could be attributed to one or more species and 28 were of unidentified species.

KEY WORDS

Baudin,
Freycinet,
Lesueur,
Levillain,
Maugé,
Péron,
Australia,
Timor,
mammals,
collection,
historical expeditions.

RÉSUMÉ

Mammifères collectés et illustrés au cours de l'Expédition Baudin en Australie et au Timor (1800-1804) : examen de la taxonomie actuelle des spécimens du Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle de Paris et des illustrations du Muséum d'Histoire naturelle du Havre.

L'expédition commandée par le Français Nicolas Thomas Baudin, à bord des navires *Le Géographe* et *Le Naturaliste* (et *Le Casuarina* pour le retour) vers l'hémisphère sud entre 1800-1804, a permis la collecte de spécimens provenant de nombreux endroits comme les îles Canaries (Tenerife), l'île Maurice (anciennement Île de France), Le Cap (Afrique du Sud), l'Australie et le Timor. Des spécimens ont également été donnés ou achetés dans des endroits non visités comme les Comores, Madagascar et Sumatra. Baudin étant malheureusement décédé à l'île Maurice au cours du voyage de retour, la responsabilité du récit du voyage a été confiée à d'autres personnes, membres de l'expédition. Ainsi, François Péron a publié la majeure partie du récit dans le premier volume du *Voyage de Découvertes aux Terres Australes*, paru en 1807. Après la mort de celui-ci, survenue en 1810, le deuxième volume du récit a été complété par Louis de Freycinet et publié en 1816. Les quatre autres volumes of the *Voyage* comprennent trois atlas (dont un par les artistes de l'expédition, Charles-Alexandre Lesueur et Nicolas-Martin Petit, paru en 1807, et deux par Freycinet, parus en 1811 et 1812), et un volume intitulé *Navigation et Géographie* publié par Freycinet en 1815. Le présent article fait état des recherches récentes et en cours, reprenant de nombreux documents originaux et révélant des détails inédits sur les collecteurs et donateurs des mammifères, recherche menée principalement dans les collections du Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle (MNHN) à Paris et dans les catalogues de collections associés. L'expédition Baudin a permis la collecte de plus de 100 000 spécimens d'histoire naturelle et reste la plus grande collection d'échantillons d'histoire naturelle d'Australie. Au total, nous avons identifié 101 taxons liés à l'expédition Baudin, dont 51 décrits à la suite de l'expédition et 50 décrits avant ou après, mais sans lien direct avec elle. Parmi les taxons décrits, 20 espèces et trois sous-espèces sont toujours reconnues valides à ce jour. À partir des informations disponibles, nous avons également identifié, 43 spécimens appartenant à 29 espèces avec au moins cinq spécimens semblant avoir été égarés. Le MNHN possède 24 holotypes, quatre paratypes, trois syntypes, cinq lectotypes, six paralectotypes et un topotype. Certains de ces spécimens font partie des quelque 51 mammifères ramenés vivants en France sur les bateaux. Les illustrations réalisées par Charles-Alexandre Lesueur complètent ce travail : parmi les 177 conservées au Muséum d'Histoire naturelle du Havre, 149 pourraient être attribuées à une ou plusieurs espèces et 28 correspondent à des espèces non identifiées.

MOTS CLÉS

Baudin,
Freycinet,
Lesueur,
Levillain,
Maugé,
Péron,
Australie,
Timor,
mammifères,
collection,
expéditions historiques.

INTRODUCTION

The French voyage to Australia led by Captain Nicolas Thomas Baudin [1754-1803] in his ship *Le Géographe*, accompanied by his consort ship *Le Naturaliste* under the command of Captain Jacques Félix Emmanuel Hamelin [1768-1839], occurred between 1800 and 1804. The voyage was commissioned by the First Consul Bonaparte [1769-1821] (he crowned himself Emperor in 1804) and highlighted the French Revolution's ideals of scientific endeavour to promote "truth" and "enlightenment" (Marchant 1998: 80).

Others on board *Le Naturaliste* included the cartographer-surveyor Louis Claude Desaulces de Freycinet [1779-1842], the young naturalist François Péron [1775-1810] and the artist Charles-Alexandre Lesueur [1778-1846] who would provide an enormous number of drawings and paintings as a record of the places visited and the natural history observed.

The expedition left the harbour of Le Havre on 19 October 1800 (see Table 1). After stops at Tenerife and Île de France (Mauritius) the ships first sighted Australia near Cape Leeuwin on 27 May 1801, before anchoring at what is now Geographe Bay, Western Australia, on 30 May 1801. They explored a large portion of the west coast of Australia before heading north to Timor. After departing from Timor on 13 November 1801 they headed south along the western Australian coast and east to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) where they arrived at Bruny Island on 13 January 1802 and Maria Island on 18 February 1802.

Le Géographe parted company with *Le Naturaliste* and headed northwest towards Wilson's Promontory (Victoria) on 24 March 1802 to begin exploring the previously uncharted southern coast of Australia between Wilson's promontory and Nuyts Archipelago. *Le Naturaliste* arrived at Port Jackson (Sydney) on 25 April 1802 after departing from Bass Strait, while *Le Géographe* arrived on 20 June 1802 (but docked on 3 July) after returning from the southern coast via Tasmania. *Le Naturaliste* and *Le Géographe* departed from Port Jackson on 18 November 1802, with the former ship carrying with it all the specimens from the expedition collected until that point. Captain Baudin held a farewell dinner with Captain Hamelin of *Le Naturaliste* on 8 December 1802 off King Island before Captain Hamelin departed for France and arrived back at Le Havre on 3 June 1803. The ship *Le Casuarina*, which was purchased by Baudin in Port Jackson, accompanied *Le Géographe* as it continued its voyage, stopping over at King Island, Kangaroo Island, King George Sound and Shark Bay before heading north to Timor. After departing Timor *Le Géographe* and *Le Casuarina* arrived at Île de France where Baudin died from illness, thought to be tuberculosis, on 16 September 1803 (Horner 1987; Duyker 2006). During this stopover the living mammals and birds were taken from the ships and housed in the garden of Madame Alexandrine Kéritel [1760-1823] in Port Louis (Fornasiero *et al.* 2004: 271-272). *Le Casuarina* remained at Île de France while command of *Le Géographe* was given to Pierre Bernard Milius [1773-1829] for the return trip that stopped over at Cape Town in South Africa before finally heading north to France and docking at Lorient at 24 March 1804 (Table 1).

The collection of mammals and birds was initially assigned to the designated scientists René Maugé [1761-1802] and Stanislas Levillain [1774-1801]. Maugé and Levillain had previously accompanied Baudin on *La Belle Angélique* (on his 1796-1798 voyage to the Caribbean). Levillain was placed aboard the *Le Naturaliste* but sadly died at sea on 29 December 1801 while travelling between Timor and Tasmania (Horner 1987: 190-191). Maugé, who was placed on board *Le Géographe*, also died during the voyage on 20 February 1802 at Maria Island off the east coast of Tasmania where he was buried (Horner 1987: 204). As a result of these deaths, specimen collection was taken over by Charles-Alexandre Lesueur, Pierre Milius (who became commander of *Le Géographe* after Baudin's death) and on occasion other crew-members, including Baudin himself. For instance, bird-collecting was executed by no less than 32 different collectors and donors (Jansen 2018). Though many specimens were recorded as being collected by "Péron et Lesueur", this is due to their packing activities in Sydney and their unpacking the second load at Lorient / Paris in 1804. So, their names do not necessarily mean they were the original collectors as Péron probably did not collect any animals (Jansen 2018: 648).

After the return voyage to France, the first partial account was published by Jean-Baptiste Geneviève Marcellin Bory de Saint-Vincent [1778-1846] who published the *Voyage dans les quatre principales îles des mers d'Afrique* (Bory de Saint-Vincent 1805a, 1805b). The official description of the voyage however was published in six volumes by Péron and Freycinet under the title of "*Voyage de Découvertes aux Terres Australes, Exécuté par Ordre de Sa Majesté l'Empereur et roi, sur les Corvettes le Géographe, le Naturaliste, et la Goélette Le Casuarina, Pendant les Années 1800, 1801, 1802 et 1804*". François Péron published the first volume of the *Voyage de Découvertes aux Terres Australes* in 1807; this was accompanied in 1807 by an atlas of illustrations by artists Charles-Alexandre Lesueur and Nicolas-Martin Petit (Bonnemains *et al.* 1988). After the death of Péron in 1810 four volumes were published by Freycinet, the first was an atlas published in 1811; the other three, published in 1812, 1815 and 1816 respectively, were an atlas of maps, the second volume of the voyage narrative, commenced by Péron and completed by Freycinet; the third was a volume entitled *Navigation et Géographie*.

As practised in the expedition to the Caribbean in 1796-1798, the Baudin expedition collected specimens of natural history by purchasing or exchanging specimens with other collectors to enlarge the collection (Jansen 2014; Jansen & Fuchs 2019). Baudin and several others on board the ships, including Péron, succeeded in obtaining specimens from a variety of locations in addition to those specifically visited during the voyage (see Péron 1804a, b).

The Baudin expedition would prove to be one of the greatest scientific expeditions ever undertaken, with the crew securing an estimated 100,000 specimens that included invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals amongst other items that were brought back to France (Bauer & Wagner 2012; Jansen 2014, 2016a, 2018). Upon the return of the ships of the Baudin expedition the zoological and botanical

specimens were housed at the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle (MNHN).

The live animals collected during the expedition were placed under the control of Georges-Frédéric Cuvier [1773-1838] (the younger brother of Georges Cuvier [1769-1832]) (Baron Jean Léopold Nicolas Frédéric, Baron Cuvier), who went to Versailles to collect the animals that he was authorised to take to the Ménagerie du Jardin des Plantes, in the premises of the Paris Museum. However, only 23 of the 75 live animals unloaded from *Le Géographe* five weeks earlier were acquired by him. The variation in number was the result of deaths that occurred en route from Lorient to Paris (including an eastern grey kangaroo) (Burkhardt 1994). These live plants and animals were donated to the Jardin des Plantes of the Muséum. Other animals were allocated to Empress Joséphine [1763-1814] (first wife of Napoléon) who had the first pick of the live specimens for her private menagerie at the château de Malmaison (Jouanin 2004; Sankey *et al.* 2004: 4), and whose orders to this effect were executed by Charles-François Brisseau de Mirbel [1776-1854]. Animals she kept included the gnu (Black Wildebeest, *Connochaetes gnou*) and zebra (*Equus* sp.) from Cape Town, South Africa (donated by Dutch nobleman Jan Willem Janssens [1762-1838]), the Governor-General of the Cape Colony in South Africa, the cassowary from the Moluccas and a pair of lemurs (Burkhardt 1994: 506).

Specimens can be identified as being collected during the Baudin expedition by the annotations on the pedestal underside of mounted specimens. These pedestals include the references to “an XI” and “an XII”, which indicate the 11th and 12th years of the French Republican or French Revolutionary Calendar, which started from the autumn equinox on 22 September 1792 and remained in force until 1 January 1806. These references thus represent the periods from 23 September 1802 to 23 September 1803 (“an 11”) and from 24 September 1803 to 22 September 1804 (“an XII”). The reference to “an XI” correlates with the shipment of specimens that arrived aboard *Le Naturaliste*, which had been collected in Port Jackson (Sydney) and prior. The reference to “an XII” correlates with the shipment that arrived with *Le Géographe*, which had been collected from King Island (Bass Strait, north-west Tasmania) and thereafter. In addition to the specimens collected, illustrations of many objects of natural history were made by Charles-Alexandre Lesueur to further record the knowledge obtained from the voyage. We also found archival records noted in the weekly reports drafted by the Muséum’s senior taxidermist Louis Dufresne [1752-1832] for the Board (Jansen 2016a).

There is uncertainty in the current taxonomy and collection locality of many specimens collected by the Baudin expedition. Therefore, there has been a need to examine the available specimens, specimen registers and illustrations in order to produce a current synthesis of the taxonomy of the specimens at the MNHN and illustrations at the Muséum d’Histoire naturelle du Havre. Thus, the aims of this study were to: 1) confirm how many mammals were collected or illustrated during the expedition, 2) identify where possible

the locations of the specimens collected, 3) confirm how many mammals were illustrated during the voyage, whether specimens were collected or not, and 4) give the current taxonomy of the mammals collected and/or illustrated.

METHODS

CONTEMPORARY SPECIMEN REGISTERS

The catalogues in the MNHN date from the 1840s (1840 in the Comparative Anatomy Collection, and 1843 in the Zoology, Mammals and Birds Collection (Callou unpubl. data) and describe the specimens present at that time in the museum. The fate of specimens exchanged, donated or destroyed prior to the existence of these books is unknown. Limited details can be found in the Muséum catalogues including binomial names, “collecting locality” (random or generic), “collector” (donor or actual collector), and year of donation. However, these catalogues are not sufficiently accurate, and the actual specimens and associated archival material are needed to establish the correctness of the data. The specimens that arrived back in France are typically from locations visited by the expedition, but approximately one-third of individuals were donations or purchases that originated from locations not visited (Jansen 2014: 10-12). For example, it is thought that Jean Macé may have provided the Baudin expedition with some specimens that came from Madagascar and India (see Jansen 2018: 83 for discussion). Similarly, Jan Willem Janssens, Governor-General of the Cape Colony in South Africa, is thought to have donated 20 live mammals (from Anjouan, Madagascar and Cape Town) (Collection Lesueur, Péron 1804a).

RECORDS OF COLLECTED SPECIMENS

Records of the number of mammal specimens, and species, collected during the Baudin expedition are not consistent, as various lists exist. These include:

- A record of 189 collected specimens including 79 individuals from 32 species that arrived with *Le Naturaliste* (letter from L. Dufresne to É. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, Archives Nationales, Série Muséum, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, AJ/15/590 dated 29 June 1803) and 110 individuals that arrived with *Le Géographe* (Records of F. Péron, Archives nationales, Série Muséum, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, AJ/15/592 dated 25 March 1804).

- A record of the inventory lists from both expeditions suggesting that 125 mammals of 68 species were collected, of which 32 were considered new species (Archives nationales, Série Muséum, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, AJ/15/592; Jussieu 1804: 10).

- An undated sheet of paper from approximately 1804 that mentions 124 mammals (Collection Lesueur, MHNH no. 21018, via Jansen 2018: 91).

- A further record of É. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (1809: 88) that suggests 152 mammals were collected during the voyage.

The list of the animals that embarked alive on board the *Le Géographe* back to France suggests there was a total of 79 ani-

TABLE 1. — Collecting localities of specimens. Modified from Jansen (2018) with some minor additions.

Date	Place	Province	Country	Main collector at this location
2-14.XI.1800	Santa Cruz	Tenerife	Canary Islands	Maugé
16.III-25.IV.1801	Port Louis	Port Louis Distr.	Île de France (Mauritius)	Maugé/Levillain
30.IV-10.VI.1801	Géographe Bay	Western Australia	Australia	Maugé
14-28.VI.1801	Rottneest Island / Swan River	Western Australia	Australia	Levillain
26.VI-14.VII.1801	Shark Bay	Western Australia	Australia	Maugé
16.VII-5.IX.1802	Shark Bay	Western Australia	Australia	Levillain
22.IX-13.XI.1801	Kupang Bay	Timor	Indonesia	Maugé/Lesueur
13.I-16.II and 20-22.V.1802	Bruny Island region	Tasmania	Australia	Lesueur
18-27 Feb 1802	Maria Island	Tasmania	Australia	Lesueur
8.III-22.V.1802	Bass Strait	Tasmania	Australia	Lesueur/Milius
20.VI-18.XI.1802	Sydney	New South Wales	Australia	Lesueur/purchase
8-27.XII.1802	King Island	Tasmania	Australia	Lesueur/purchase
2.I-1.II.1803	Kangaroo Island	South Australia	Australia	Lesueur/Baudin
6-7.II.1803	Eyre Peninsula	South Australia	Australia	Lesueur/Baudin
17.II-1.III.1803	King George Sound	Western Australia	Australia	Lesueur/Baudin
16-23.III.1803	Shark Bay	Western Australia	Australia	Lesueur/Baudin
6.V-3.VI.1803	Kupang Bay	Timor	Indonesia	Lesueur/Baudin/purchase
7.VIII-16.XII.1803	Port Louis	Port Louis district	Île de France (Mauritius)	Lesueur/purchase
3-24.I.1804	Cape Town	Western Cape	South-Africa	Lesueur/purchase

mals, while a second list suggests 73 animals embarked alive back to France. The six animals on the first list, but not on the second, include *Kangaroo giganteus*, *Lemur catta*, *Lemur cinerea*, *Hyrax capensis* and two species of land turtle (Burkhardt 1994: 502). Many of these animals that embarked alive however did not survive or died soon after their arrival in France. Jangoux *et al.* (2010: 268-269) suggested that 17 mammals were brought back alive on board *Le Naturaliste* and 26 were brought back alive on board *Le Géographe*.

The majority of specimens that were mounted arrived on *Le Géographe* (Journal du laboratoire de Zoologie par Dufresne, de Vendémiaire an XII à Mars 1806 et de Janvier 1821 à Décembre 1822, Archives nationales, Série Muséum, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, AJ/15/590 & 591). Most likely the majority of mammals that arrived with *Le Naturaliste* were in bad condition or used for exchanges. The only collections clearly listed were those done during the second visit to Timor.

SPECIMENS REFERRED TO BY THE BAUDIN EXPEDITION

The Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle today holds most of the specimens collected from the Baudin expedition. The available information suggests that 101 species relating to the Baudin expedition were identified during this study. Of these, 51 species were described as a result of the expedition and 51 species were described either before or subsequently, but were not associated with the expedition. Of the taxa described as a result of the expedition 20 species and three subspecies are still recognised today. The MNHN currently holds 24 holotypes, four paratypes, three syntypes, five lectotypes, six paralectotypes, one topotype and nine non-type specimens (Table 2). At least some of these specimens appear to be part of the 51 specimens of animals that were also brought back to France alive (Table 2). Also associated with these taxa were 177 illustrations by Charles-Alexandre Lesueur that are held at the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle du Havre, and of which 149 could be attributed to one or more species and 28 were of unidentified species. As far as we know,

no research was performed in other collections worldwide to trace back Baudin Expedition mammals.

After the arrival of the Baudin expedition collections at the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris, many mammal specimens were subsequently distributed to other institutions due to several factors that included: 1) the very large number of specimens collected and the limited number of skilled curators to curate them, and 2) the French Revolution's scientific endeavour to disseminate "truth" and "enlightenment" (Marchant 1998: 80), which resulted in many specimens being sent to numerous schools and universities in France. For example, 28 mammals from the MNHN collections (not necessarily from the Baudin expedition) were sent to Austria and 267 mammals to The Netherlands (Archives Nationales AJ/15/840) due to reparations for the Napoleonic Wars based on the stipulations of the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) (Bauer & Wagner 2012: 135). Like birds, mammals were used extensively for exchanges, however, documentation is rather poor prior to the 1850's in the MNHN, and therefore few exchanges can be retraced. Birds for example ended up in places including Abbeville, Blois, Bologna, Caen, Edinburgh, Firenze, Geneva, Hauts-de-Seine, Kolkata, La Châtre, La Chau de Fonds, Leiden, Liverpool, Milan, Moulins, Nancy, Otago, Paris, Pavia, Rouen, Torino, Toulon, Verdun, Vienna, Washington (Jansen 2018).

The distinction between the collectors became obvious from Port Jackson onwards when it was Lesueur who collected birds and was appointed as the expedition's bird and mammal collector. Specimens collected from King Island onwards were recorded by Péron (1804b). Prior to Port Jackson, René Maugé was the prime bird collector, an experienced taxidermist, and as he was also a good shot he was designated the lead mammal collector. This clearly shows that some of the data attached to the specimens were altered, a practice which was also applied to the landmarks the expedition discovered (Fornasiero *et al.* 2016: 48). Péron was blind in one eye, and he focussed more on smaller creatures that could be easily caught.

COLLECTOR/S. — Charles-Alexandre Lesueur, *contra* Desmarest (1822: 517); Girard (1856: 124) who mentioned both Péron and Lesueur as its collectors.

COLLECTION LOCALITY. — South of Tasmania, Australia (approx. 44°S, 144°E).

COLLECTION DATE. — No data.

SPECIMEN NUMBER/S. — No data.

ILLUSTRATIONS. — No data.

UNIDENTIFIED SPECIMENS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

In addition to the species listed above, this study revealed the existence of additional specimens of unidentified mammal species offered to Pierre-Bernard Milius, the commander of the French corvette, *Le Géographe* (after Baudin's death in Mauritius), both for the ménagerie of Empress Joséphine and the MNHN. These specimens were offered by Jan Willem Janssens, Governor-General of the Cape Colony in South Africa, but further details are lacking (Milius 1987: 57; Report 20 April 1804 by Antoine-François de Fourcroy [1755-1809] stored in library of the MNHN). These include:

- 1) two monkeys (Baviaanen) male and female;
- 2) a species of squirrel;
- 3) the head of a male deer;
- 4) the head of a wild boar;
- 5) the skin of a Once (named Tiger by the colonists);
- 6) a horn of a rhinoceros of unknown species;

Other records of mammals of uncertain species include:

- 7) a small possum that was collected at Dirk Hartog Island at 3 September 1801 (Levillain, see fur seals, Muséum d'Histoire naturelle du Havre, Inv. no. 07008GA) but no further details have been recorded;
- 8) two *Talpoides coeca* that were donated by M. van Esland (Péron 1804a). Though *Talpoides Lacépède*, 1799: 10 is a synonym of *Spalax* Gùldenstädt, 1770: 410 there is no formal description of the species name "*coeca*";
- 9) Illustrations of other mammals not adequately identified can be found within Figures 214-241.

DISCUSSION

The expedition led by Nicolas Baudin to the southern hemisphere between 1800-1804, which consisted of the ships *Le Géographe* and *Le Naturaliste* (and *Le Casuarina* for the return journey), was a floating laboratory. On board these ships were designated scientists, artists and doctors, along with maps, books and facilities to collect and store an extraordinary number of specimens that were successfully brought back to France. As a result of the personnel and facilities, the expedition made an enormous contribution to science including the study of mammals. The description of 51 species of mammals (of which 20 species and three subspecies are still recognised as valid) along with 149 illustrations of mammals by the artist Charles-Alexandre Lesueur have made a great contribution to mammalogy, especially relating to Australia.

Despite the success of the voyage there were still various aspects that remained unresolved during this study, including the whereabouts of many specimens. The information obtained during this study suggests that 101 species of mammals were collected and/or illustrated, which contrasts with the records of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris that indicate either 189 or 152 mammals were collected.

Despite the efforts of the authors of this study to find every specimen associated with the expedition many specimens could not be found in the museum collection and it is unclear if these are still in the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris or have been transferred to other institutions. Therefore, further research is required both to determine where such specimens may have been sent and to potentially discover specimens within the Paris museum that may relate to the Baudin expedition.

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