

**KARYOTYPIC AND MORPHOMETRIC STUDIES ON JORDANIAN  
RODENTS OF THE GENUS *GERBILLUS*, WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE ON THE ECOLOGY OF  
*G. CHEESMANI*.**

By

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**ABSTRACT**

karyotypic and morphologic studies were conducted on six species of the genus *Gerbillus* occurring in Jordan (*G. cheesmani*, *G. dasyurus*, *G. gerbillus*, *G. henleyi*, *G. nanus* and *G. andersoni*). These gerbils belong to two groups; naked-footed (*G. dasyurus*, *G. henleyi* and *G. nanus*) and hairy footed gerbils (*G. andersoni*, *G. cheesmani* and *G. gerbillus*). The diploid number ranged from 38-60 and a fundamental number of 62-80. Morphometric studies revealed the presence of six distinct species of the genus *Gerbillus*. For each species, cranial, dental and bacular illustrations were presented. Main differences between similar species were summarized. Both morphological and karyoloical studies confirmed the doubtful presence of *G. andersoni* in Jordan. Maps showing present distribution for all gerbils in Jordan are included. Sand-dwelling gerbils are (*G. andersoni*, *G. cheesmani* and *G. gerbillus*), while *G. nanus* is prevalent in saline habitats. *G. dasyurus* was found to inhabit rocky areas, where as *G. henleyi* was distributed in the hammada. Burrow system of *G. cheesmani*, association with plant communities and other biological notes were given.