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4. Kartavtseva, I.V. & Korobytsina, K.V. : **Karyotype of Afghan gerbil of *Meriones zarudnyi* (Rodentia, Gerbillidae)**

The gerbil family, Gerbillidae, includes upto 145 species (Ellerman 1941, Socolov 1977), and 73 gerbil species are chromosomally analyzed. In the present report, we describe the karyotype of the Afghan gerbil, *Meriones zarudnyi*.

One adult male was obtained from the Russian collection of Sankt-Petesburg Institute of Zoology, Academy of Science. The specimen was trapped in region *terra typica*, near Kushka South Turkmenia on the Afghanistan border. Bone marrow cells from the femur were prepared for conventional chromosome slides by the standard method.

The chromosome number of *M. zarudnyi* was 2n=42 and FN=78 (Fig. 1). The karyotype consists of 13 metacentric (nos. 1-13), 4 submetacentric (nos. 14-16), 3 acrocentric (nos. 17-19) autosomal pairs, and a large submetacentric X and the smallest metacentric Y chromosome.

Among the Afghan gerbils, *M. crassus* showed 2n=60 and NF=72-74 (Nadler & Lay 1967, Benazzou *et al.* 1982), whereas *M. persicus* was 2n=42 and NF=78 (Vorontsov & Korobitsina 1969, Korobitsina & Kartavseva 1984) with a similarity to the karyotype of *M. zarudnyi* presently examined. Although the chromosome number of Afghan gerbils was listed (Pavlinov *et al.* 1990), this list was mostly constructed by our data.

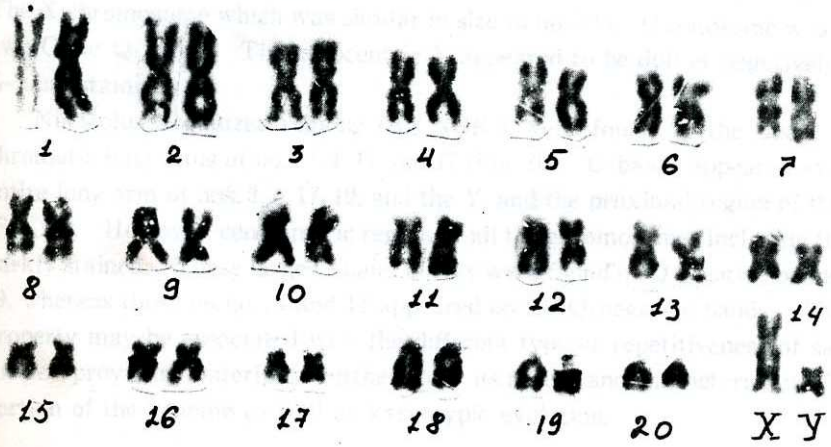

Fig. 1. Karyotype of male *M. zarudnyi*.

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