

New Eocene South American native ungulates from the Quebrada de los Colorados Formation at Los Cardones National Park, Argentina

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In the last few years, the Quebrada de Los Colorados Formation has become an important middle Eocene fossiliferous unit in Northwestern Argentina. In this unit, the South American native ungulates were until now only represented by the order Notoungulata, including one family of Typotheria and three of Toxodontia. In this contribution, we present a new faunistic assemblage of South American native ungulates, collected from outcrops of the Quebrada de Los Colorados Formation at Los Cardones National Park, Calchaquí Valleys, Salta Province (Argentina). This new assemblage is constituted by the following taxa: litoptern Didolodontidae cf. *Ernestokokenia* sp., Astrapotheria indet., and notoungulate Notostylopidae *Homalostylops* sp., a ?*Homalostylops* sp., typotheriid “Oldfieldthomasiidae” *Colbertia falui* sp. nov., *Colbertia lumbrerense*, and *Colbertia* sp. and toxodont “Notohippidae” *Pampahippus secundus*. *Colbertia falui* sp. nov. differs from the other species of *Colbertia* by the following features: lower cheek teeth with both more labially angular and oblique trigonid; lower premolars more labio-lingually compressed; with proportionally larger trigonid, and shorter talonid; ectoflexid transversally deeper; lower molars with a more developed paralophid, and more expanded metalophid and entoconid; the latter is located in a more mesial position, being closer to the metaconid; deep and lingually narrower talonid basin; disto-lingual sulcus transversally shallower; more developed cingulids; and m3 with less lingually projected hypoconulid. This new fauna markedly increases the taxonomic richness known for this formation since it includes the first mention of notostylopids, “oldfieldthomasiids”, litoptern didolodontids, and astrapotheres. With the current evidence, we postulate an ungulate migration from Patagonia to Northwestern Argentina during the Eocene. We also hypothesize that the observed taxonomic differences among the Quebrada de Los Colorados, Geste, and Lumbrera formations are more probably associated to orogenic factors that have regulated the faunal dynamic in Northwestern Argentina during the Paleogene than to a differential sampling effort or taphonomic biases.

Key words: Mammalia, South American native ungulates, Casamayoran SALMA, Paleogene, Quebrada de Los Colorados Formation, Argentina.

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