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Systematic Relationships of Natalid and Furipterid Bats, Based on Hyoid Morphology (Chiroptera: Natalidae and Furipteridae)

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Oral Presentation 2.3

SYSTEMATIC RELATIONSHIPS OF NATALID AND FURIPTERID BATS, BASED ON HYOID MORPHOLOGY (CHIROPTERA: NATALIDAE AND FURIPTERIDAE)

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The musculature of the hyoid region of two species of bats (Order Chiroptera) from two separate families, Natalidae and Furipteridae, was examined via microscopic dissection. Different morphological characters were scored and then entered into the computer program PAUP (Phylogenetic Analysis Using Parsimony), along with characters of families previously examined by Griffiths. A cladogram was generated. The analysis revealed support for the placement of Natalidae and Furipteridae together within the Superfamily Nataloidea, along with the families Thyropteridae and Myzopodidae. This grouping of Myzopodidae is quite surprising from a geographical standpoint. Myzopodids are endemic only to Madagascar, while thyropterids, natalids and furipterids are found in Central America and northern South America. Thus, the placement of Myzopodidae with the other three geographically close families implies that all four of these families share an unknown common ancestor in Africa.