

THE PRIMARY BRANCHES OF THE THE THORACIC AORTA IN NUTRIA (*Myocastor coypus* - RODENTIA: MAMMALIA)

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The nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) belongs to the Capromyidae family. It is a large rodent (70-100 cm; 7-9 Kg), very pursued by the man, because of the quality of its skin and edibility of its meat. It is original from South America, but it was introduced in the USA and Europe, where it is explored by commercial breeders. In spite of growing importance of nutria, there are scarce information regarding its biology being almost non existent any more detailed references regarding its morphology. The present work seeks to detail the anatomical aspects of thoracic branches of the nutria aorta, looking for to correlate them to those already described for other species, particularly rodents. For such, six animals were used, being four males and two females, all adults, of different origins, obtained after natural death. They had their arterial vascular system injected, through the common carotid artery, with colored solution of Neoprene latex. Soon after they were fixed in a 10% aqueous solution of formalin and later dissected. The dissection was oriented by the removal of the thoracic walls and consequent exhibition of the thoracic aorta and their branches, allowing to recognize that: a) the aortic arch of the nutria emits a thick brachiocefalic trunk, which sends, very close to its origin, the left common carotid artery. After a short itinerary it emits the right common carotid artery, being constituted like this in the right subclavian artery; b) after the emission of the brachiocefalic trunk emerges from the aortic arch the left subclavian artery; c) the subclavian arteries, right and left, show symmetry in the emission of their direct branches and emit, in sequence, the internal thoracic arteries, the intercostal supreme artery and a common trunk for the vertebral arteries and deep and superficial cervical arteries. After that trunk it is constituted in axillary artery which crosses the cranial margin of the first rib; d) thwarting reports done for other rodents, in the nutria specimens here examined the presence of a bicarotidal trunk or a left subclavian artery with origin in the brachiocefalic trunk, as described in other caviforms, were not verified.

Key Words: anatomy, aorta, Nutria, *Myocastor coypus*.