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MIDDLE MIOCENE RODENTS FROM QUEBRADA HONDA, BOLIVIA

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Despite South America's rich fossil mammal record, relatively little work has focused on middle-latitude faunas of Miocene age; most current understanding of South American mammals during the Miocene derives from the extremes of the continent: La Venta, Colombia (5° N) and southern Argentina (≥ 40° S). Quebrada Honda in southern Bolivia (21° S) is intermediate in latitude between these two regions, partly filling this large geographic gap. The fauna, temporally well-constrained to 12.7-13.0 Ma, is contemporaneous with the only other Laventan South American Land Mammal "Age" fauna known, La Venta, Colombia. Since Quebrada Honda is more than 3,000 km south of La Venta, comparing the two faunas will clarify patterns of mammal distributions during this interval. Previous Quebrada Honda studies focused on larger mammals, but the rodents have not been studied in detail. New collections from Quebrada Honda in 2007 make such an analysis possible, and preliminary results are provided here. More than half of the specimens collected at Quebrada Honda are rodents. Although absent from La Venta, chinchillids are the most common Quebrada Honda rodents (57% of rodent specimens). Based on molar laminae with relatively straight anterior and posterior margins, the specimens appear to pertain to the lagostomine *Pliolagostomus*, a genus known from Santacrucian through Chasicoan faunas of Patagonia. The caviid Orthomyctera from Quebrada Honda represents the earliest and northernmost occurrence of the genus. It is common in Chasicoan through Montehermosan faunas of northeastern and western Argentina. The Quebrada Honda species appears to be O. rigens; it is small with a slight elongation of the anterior p4 prism, anterior and posterior P4 lobes of equal size, and a broad M3 third prism. One echimyid is represented by a single specimen with trilophodont, high crowned teeth and m3 smaller than m2. It resembles some adelphomyines, such as *Prostichomys*, but the molars lack mesolophids. The other echimyid, a heteropsomyine, is brachydont and is represented by 13 specimens; it resembles *Pampamys*, but differs in wear patterns, with the posterior flexids becoming isolated first.