

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Animal Abstract

Element Code: AMAFF08070

Data Sensitivity: No

CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE

NAME: *Neotoma mexicana mexicana*

COMMON NAME: Mexican Woodrat

SYNONYMS: *N. mexicana bullata*

FAMILY: Muridae

AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION: Baird. 1855. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. Proc. 7:333.

TYPE LOCALITY: In mountains near Chihuahua City, Chihuahua, Mexico.

TYPE SPECIMEN: Collected by John Potts, without date, but entered in United States National Museum Catalogue July 6, 1854.

TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS: One of 20 North American species of *Neotoma*. One of 5 Arizona *Neotoma* species. One of 24 North American subspecies of *mexicana*; one of 4 Arizona subspecies. Hoffmeister (1986:427) considers this subspecies as synonymous with *N. m. bullata*.

DESCRIPTION: Head and body 6.5 - 7.75 in. (16.5 - 19.7 cm); tail 6 - 6.5 in. (15.2 - 16.5 cm). Normally gray with a tawny wash; belly grayish white; tail distinctly bicolored, whitish below, blackish above; throat region plumbeous-colored at their bases, with antero-medial fold deep. Upperparts of adults appear grizzled, underparts plumbeous or gray, dark-colored fur does not extend onto dorsum of hind foot.

AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION: *Neotoma m. mexicana* differs from *N. m. pinetorum* in having a smaller skull. At the species level, *N. mexicana* differs from *N. stephensi* in having a less bushy tail, with an antero-medial fold, body and hind feet larger, maxillary tooththrow longer, rostrum heavier, and base of baculum with more pronounced wings. *N. mexicana* differs from *N. cinerea* in having a less bushy tail, with an antero-medial fold, and hind foot and skull shorter. The species differs from *N. lepida* in that it has an antero-medial fold, hind feet longer, skull and tooththrow longer, and baculum much shorter.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Color drawing (Burt and Grossenheider 1976: plate 18)

TOTAL RANGE: Southeast Arizona, southern New Mexico, West Texas, and into Mexico in appropriate habitat.

RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA: Southeastern Arizona, including Chiricahua, Huachuca, Pinaleno, Rincon, Santa Catalina and Santa Rita mountains.

SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS

BIOLOGY: Nocturnal. Builds dens usually in crevices in rocky outcrops, using various available articles such as sticks, pine cones, bark, leaves, bones etc.. Packrats are committed to a diet of moist but low-energy herbage, thus the den is of key importance in lowering the energetic cost of thermoregulation (Vaughan 1990).

REPRODUCTION: Breeds from April to September. Litter of 1-3 young; gestation period 31-34 days. May have two litters per year. Juveniles born early in the breeding season may breed late in the season of their first year.

FOOD HABITS: Feeds on the foliage of shrubs and forbs, including conifer needles. Also feeds on acorns, pine seeds, and juniper berries. Because they do not hibernate, they cache food in dens.

HABITAT: Rocky outcrops in montane coniferous (Ponderosa Pine) forest. In the Huachuca Mountains, they live in the Douglas-fir-pine zone.

ELEVATION: Above 5,000 feet (1,525 m), often above 6,500 feet (1,983 m).

PLANT COMMUNITY: Rocky Mountain montane coniferous forest.

POPULATION TRENDS: Unknown

SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS: None.
STATE STATUS: 2 (AZGFD, AWCS 2022)
[None (AGFD SWAP 2012)]

OTHER STATUS:

MANAGEMENT FACTORS:

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN:

SUGGESTED PROJECTS:

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: USFS, NPS.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION**LITERATURE CITATIONS:**

- Arizona Game and Fish Department. 2012. Arizona's State Wildlife Action Plan 2012-2022. Phoenix, AZ.
- Arizona Game and Fish Department. 2022. Arizona Wildlife Conservation Strategy: 2022-2032. Arizona Game and Fish Department, Phoenix, Arizona. 378 pages.
- Burt, W.H., and R.P. Grossenheider. 1976. A field guide to the mammals of America north of Mexico. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. pp. 169-171.
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- Cornely, J.E. and R.J. Baker. 1986. *Neotoma mexicana*. Mammalian Species 262:1-7.
- Goldman, E.A. 1910. Revision of the wood rats of the genus *Neotoma*. North American Fauna, v. 31. Government Printing Office, p.59.
- Hall, E.R. 1981. The mammals of North America. Second edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. New York, p.761.
- Hoffmeister, D.F. 1986. Mammals of Arizona. University of Arizona Press, pp. 424-428.
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- Vaughan, T.A. 1990. Ecology of Living Packrats. in Packrat Middens: The Last 40,000 Years of Biotic Change. Edited by J.L. Betancourt, T.R. Van Devender, and P.S. Martin. University of Arizona Press, Tucson. pp. 17-18, 21-22.

MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Revised: 1992-05-07 (JGH)
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