

California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Interagency Wildlife Task Group

FOG SHREW

Sorex sonomae

Family: SORICIDAE
M005

Order: INSECTIVORA

Class: MAMMALIA

Written by: J. Harris

Reviewed by: H. Shellhammer

Edited by: S. Granholm

Updated by: CWHR Program Staff, May 2000

DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

The fog shrew is common along the Pacific Coast from Del Norte and Siskiyou cos. south to San Francisco Bay. It prefers damp, marshy or brushy microhabitats in coastal Douglas fir and redwood forests and associated wet meadow and fresh emergent wetland habitats. In California it has been trapped in redwood or dense spruce forests, under logs in dense chaparral, in marshes, and near muddy stream bottoms (Maldonado 1999). It also occurs in montane riparian and hardwood-conifer habitats.

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: Major foods include slugs and snails, centipedes, amphibians, insect larvae, and other invertebrates. Some seeds and fungi also eaten (Whitaker and Maser 1976). Forages by searching under ground cover or in litter and decaying logs (Maldonado 1999). Captive animals cache food and immobilize animal prey (Maser and Hooven 1974).

Cover: Uses heavy ground cover and decaying logs. Digs burrows, especially if other cover is absent.

Reproduction: Builds nests of grass, leaves, and moss in captivity (Maser and Hooven 1974).

Water: Drinks water in captivity (Maser and Hooven 1974).

Pattern: Tends to occur in moist microhabitats such as marshy spots, moist streambanks, wet brushy areas (e.g., thickets of alder and skunk cabbage), and decaying logs in understories of forests.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: The fog shrew is nocturnal (Maser and Hooven 1974, Whitaker and Maser 1976). It wakes to eat cached food. Probably active yearlong.

Seasonal Movements/Migration: No data found.

Home Range: No data found.

Territory: No data found.

Reproduction: Reproductively active Feb-Aug.; 2-6 young/litter (Carraway 1985, Maldonado 1999).

Niche: The fog shrew occurs with *S. trowbridgii*, which prefers the litter layer of mature forests, and *S. vagrans*, which is most common in meadows and grassy areas where the two species occur together.

Comments: Has in the past been referred to as the "Sonoma shrew" because its distribution was thought to be limited to Sonoma Co. (Maldonado 1999).

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