

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

FRINGED MYOTIS

Myotis thysanodes

Family: VESPERTILIONIDAE
M026

Order: CHIROPTERA

Class: MAMMALIA

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

The fringed myotis is widespread in California, occurring in all but the Central Valley and Colorado and Mojave deserts. Its abundance appears to be irregular; it may be common locally. It occurs in a wide variety of habitats; records range in elevation from sea level to 2850 m (9350 ft) in New Mexico (Barbour and Davis 1969). Optimal habitats are pinyon-juniper, valley foothill hardwood and hardwood-conifer, generally at 1300-2200 m (4000-7000 ft).

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: Feeds mostly on beetles, and also on moths, arachnids, and orthopterans (Black 1974). Foraging flight is slow and maneuverable, and capture may utilize wing and tail membranes. This species is capable of hovering, and occasionally may land on the ground. Feeds over water, over open habitats, and by gleaning from foliage.

Cover: The fringed myotis roosts in caves, mines, buildings, and crevices. Separate day and night roosts may be used. Adults and subadults generally form separate groups in the roost.

Reproduction: Maternity colonies of up to 200 individuals are located in caves, mines, buildings, or crevices. Adult males are absent from maternity colonies, which are occupied from late April through September. Maternity group members may remain together during hibernation.

Water: Requires water; has a low urine-concentrating ability (Studier et al. 1970).

Pattern: Uses open habitats, early successional stages, streams, lakes, and ponds as foraging areas.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Nocturnal. Hibernates. This species is active from shortly after sunset to 4-5 hr after sunset. Most activity is from 1-2 hr after sunset. Wind and precipitation reduce activity. The period of hibernation lasts from October through March. Pregnant and lactating females may be heterothermic as an energy saving strategy (Studier et al. 1973).

Seasonal Movements/Migration: This species is migratory, making relatively short, local movements to suitable hibernacula.

Home Range: No data found.

Territory: Probably not territorial. May be found singly or in colonies.

Reproduction: Mating occurs in the fall, followed by delayed fertilization. Gestation lasts 50-60 days. The young are born from May through July, but most are born in late June. A single offspring is produced per yr. Lactating females are found in July and August. Young females are mature in their first yr, males are mature in their second yr. The maximum longevity recorded is 18.3 yr (Tuttle and Stevenson 1982).

Niche: Sympatric with many other species. This species is a slow, maneuverable flier, and uses foliage gleaning. Possible predators include owls and snakes.

Comments: The fringed myotis is easily disturbed at roosting sites.

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