

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

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ORD'S KANGAROO RAT

*Dipodomys ordii*

Family: HETEROMYIDAE  
M099

Order: RODENTIA

Class: MAMMALIA

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#### DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

Present in 2 disjunct areas in the northeastern and east-central sections of the state. In northeastern California, species ranges from vicinity of Goose Lake (Modoc Co.) south to vicinity of Beckworth Pass (Plumas Co.), and occurs in the vicinity of Woodfords (Alpine Co.) (Grinnell 1922). In east-central California, species occurs in the north end of Owens Valley (Mono Co.) and locations near to it. Common in sparse to moderately dense sagebrush, low sage, and alkali desert scrub habitats; less common in dense canopy of these habitats. Bitterbrush and pinyon-juniper are marginal habitats.

#### SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

**Feeding:** Diet includes seeds of grasses, forbs, and shrubs, leafy vegetation, and some insects.

**Cover:** Burrows are excavated in sandy or gravelly soil at the bases of shrubs or edges of rocks.

**Reproduction:** The female lines the nest chamber with dry grass parts (Hall 1946).

**Water:** Water is obtained metabolically from food, and from moisture in food. Will drink water when available (Burt and Grossenheider 1976).

**Pattern:** Desert scrub flats with moderate canopy coverage and gravelly soils are preferred.

#### SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

**Activity Patterns:** Yearlong nocturnal activity. Like other heteromyids of its size, shows reduced surface activity in periods of food stress and cold spells.

**Seasonal Movements/Migration:** None

**Home Range:** In New Mexico, home range averaged 1.4 ha (3.4 ac) (Blair 1943).

**Territory:** Aggressively solitary. Territory probably equals home range.

**Reproduction:** Breeds from January into March, the onset depending upon the severity of winter. Litter size averages 2-4. May breed again in September or October (Duke 1944).

**Niche:** *D. ordii* is a small to medium-sized, relatively short-tailed, inhabitant of sandy sagebrush flats. Some sympatric heteromyids are *Microdipodops* spp., *D. microps*, *D.*

panamintinus, *Perognathus parvus*, and *P. longimembris*. Predators include owls, foxes, coyotes, bobcats, badgers, and snakes.

#### REFERENCES

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- Grinnell, J. 1922. A geographical study of the kangaroo rats of California. *Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool.* 24:1-124.
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Life history accounts for species in the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHR) System were originally published in: Zeiner, D.C., W.F.Laudenslayer, Jr., K.E. Mayer, and M. White, eds. 1988-1990. *California's Wildlife*. Vol. I-III. California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, California. Updates are noted in accounts that have been added or edited since original publication.