

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

PINYON MOUSE

Peromyscus truei

Family: MURIDAE
M120

Order: RODENTIA

Class: MAMMALIA

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

Found throughout California except in the Central Valley, most of the Mojave Desert, Owens Valley, and high-elevation regions of the Sierra Nevada. Occurs in most forested and shrub habitats in the state. Locally abundant in rocky areas with brushy thickets, or coniferous woodland with understory of mixed shrubs. Abundant in pinyon-juniper (Honeycutt et al. 1981) and ponderosa pine habitats. Elevational range from sea level to 2600 m (8600 ft).

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: Feeds primarily on leaves, seeds, arthropods, berries, fungi, and acorns (Merritt 1974). *Peromyscus truei* is an omnivore that forages on the ground surface, usually amidst underbrush, but also will climb small trees to forage. Sometimes caches food.

Cover: Seems to require some tree cover (Holbrook 1978) and/or brush thickets, rocks, logs, slash, litter.

Reproduction: Nests are constructed in hollow branches, trunks, logs, snags, or in rock crevices and at base of shrubs.

Water: May meet water needs from food or dew. Diet probably is influenced by water availability. Under lab conditions, drank 6 ml (0.2 oz) water/day (Merritt 1974).

Pattern: Pinyon-juniper or other open woodland, brushy and rocky areas, especially with ground cover.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Active year-round. Nocturnal.

Seasonal Movements/Migration: None.

Home Range: Home range in pinyon-juniper woodland in Colorado averaged 0.32 ha (0.79 ac), varying from 0.13-0.53 ha (0.32-1.30 ac) for males; averaged 0.25 ha (0.62 ac) for females, varying from 0.12-0.47 ha (0.31 -1.15 ac) (Douglas 1969). Merritt (1974) reported densities of 2.5/ha (1/ac) in oak-bay woodland and 86/ha (35/ac) in chaparral.

Territory: Territory restricted to vicinity of nest (McCabe and Blanchard 1950).

Reproduction: Breeds from April to November, with most preliminary records spanning May into September (Svihla 1932). Litter size averages 3 young (range 1-6). Average weaning age of 50 days (Clark 1938). Females may breed at 3 mo. of age (Layne 1968).

Niche: Considerable niche overlap with *Peromyscus californicus*, though in general *P. truei* is more specialized than *P. californicus*, in being more confined to "richer" chaparral (McCabe and Blanchard 1950). Predators include weasels, coyotes, owls, and feral cats.

Comments: *Peromyscus truei* is easily confused with *P. californicus* and *P. boylii*. It differs from *P. boylii* in that ear length is equal to, or greater than, hindfoot length (versus 70-80% of hindfoot length in *P. boylii*). *P. truei* is considerably smaller than *P. californicus* (Hoffmeister 1981).

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M120

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.