

# Occurrence of the Cotton Mouse, *Peromyscus gossypinus*, in Northcentral Oklahoma

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Occurrence of the cotton mouse, *Peromyscus gossypinus*, has been documented in Bryan, Haskell, Latimer, Le Flore, McCurtain, and Pushmataha County in southeast Oklahoma (1). The northernmost Oklahoma record of occurrence was in Haskell County, 10.5 km E, 3.2 km S of Stigler, Oklahoma (1).

Ten cotton mice (six males and four females) were trapped in Sherman live-traps in the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, Osage County, Oklahoma, 200 km northwest of the Haskell County location. This represents the northwesternmost occurrence of cotton mice in the United States. Mean measurements (in mm) were: total length, 177.3; length of tail, 79.9; length of body, 97.4; length of hind foot, 22.2; length of ear, 15.8; weight, 28.3 g; greatest length of skull, 28.1; and breadth of zygomatic, 13.7. All measurements were within the range proposed for *P. gossypinus* by Wolfe and Linzey (2) and Schmidly (3). As described for *P. gossypinus* (2), each had a distinct dusky middorsal stripe from the shoulder to the base of the tail and each tail was bicolored (2).

These cotton mice were caught in a lowland oak-hickory-elm forest along Sand Creek containing the following species: *Quercus* spp., *Ulmus rubra*, *Bumelia lanuginosa*, *Carya* sp., *Staphylea trifolia*, *Celtis occidentalis*, *Cercis canadensis*, *Cornus* sp., *Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*, and *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*. *Peromyscus gossypinus* has been reported in similar habitats (2).

In areas where both *P. leucopus* and *P. gossypinus* occur, *P. leucopus* usually inhabits upland woods and *P. gossypinus* lowland woods (4,5). However, *P. leucopus* was taken in the same trap lines with *P. gossypinus* in the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve. McCarley (5) suggested that *P. gossypinus* might ecologically displace *P. leucopus* from lowland riparian woods.

It is probable that *P. gossypinus* has dispersed to the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve along forested river valleys of the Arkansas River, Bird Creek, and Sand Creek from southern and eastern provenances.

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