
Further Notes on the Mammals of Black Mesa Region, Oklahoma

TIM W. CLARK and DAVID D. SKRYJA,
University of Wyoming, Laramie

The mammals of the Black Mesa region of Oklahoma have been investigated by a number of workers. Blair (1939) listed 17 mammals for the region, 11 (65%) having taxonomic and ecological affinities with forms found to the west in the Rocky Mountains and six (35%) having affinities to forms found in the high plains to the east. Chase (1939) listed *Peromyscus truei truei* and *Erethizon epixanthum epixanthum* as new for the district. Chase and Barclay (1939) found another new form, *Neotoma mexicana fallax*. Of the 19 mammals reported by Glass (1949) from the region, 12 were new. While investigating the contents of owl pellets from Tesequite Canyon, Glass (1953) reported finding a *Notiosorex* and *Reithrodontomys* (probably *montanus griseus*).

The mesa region of Oklahoma is considered to be a distinct "Biotic District" by Blair and Hubbell (1938) and has been further described by Dice (1943), Rogers (1953 and 1954), Schemnitz (1958), and U.S.D.A. Cimarron County Soil Survey (1960).

The purpose of this study was to verify the presence of previously unreported mammals in the Black Mesa region of Northwestern Oklahoma. Notes are also included on several species whose status has changed significantly in the district since the last studies. Collections and observations were made by the senior author during the period from August, 1965 to January, 1966 and on two additional trips made in 1967 and one trip with the junior author in June, 1967.

RODENTIA

Citellus tridecemlineatus arenicola (A. H. Howell). The thirteen-lined ground squirrel. Not previously reported for this region. One individual was seen on the high plains approximately 13 miles west of Boise City near the highway in June, 1967.

Cynomys ludovicianus ludovicianus (Ord). The black-tailed prairie dog. Glass (1949) reported seven colonies present in the mesa country. All have now been exterminated.

Sigmodon hispidus (Say and Ord). The hispid cotton rat. Not previously recorded for the district. One specimen was collected in the grass bordering an irrigation ditch six miles north of Kenton in June, 1967. Mohlenrich (1961) reported *S. hispidus* in New Mexico in the Cimarron River Valley in Union County, three miles west of Kenton, Oklahoma.

Reithrodontomys megalotis aztecus (J. A. Allen). The western harvest mouse. Not previously reported for this district. Two specimens were collected in an alfalfa field six miles north of Kenton in June, 1967. Two other individuals were seen under freshly cut piles of alfalfa in the same field.

Castor canadensis missouriensis (Bailey). The beaver. Not previously reported for this district. One individual was observed on the Cimarron River approximately ½-mile east of the bridge crossing the Cimarron River north of Kenton. Mr. Tucker (personal communication, 1967) said that several more were present in the area. Apparently beaver are now moving into the area.

CARNIVORA

Urocyon cinereoargenteus scottii (Mearns). The gray fox. Prior to this study the only evidence of the gray fox in this district was a "weathered cranium" found six miles north of Kenton, Oklahoma (Urban and Wimmer, 1959). During 1965 an adult and five young were observed. Four other adults were observed later the same year. A skin was collected in October, 1965.

Conepatus mesoleucus figginsii (Miller). The hog-nosed skunk. This animal was not collected previously or during this study. Glass (1949) reported that this animal was frequently found in Furnace Canyon, Baca County, Colorado, which is a tributary of North Carrizzo Creek immediately north of the state line. During June, 1967, diggings which were believed to be the work of this species were observed in a creek bottom tributary to North Carrizzo Creek in Oklahoma about two miles south of the Colorado border.

Mr. Truman Tucker related he shot a hog-nosed skunk in northwestern Oklahoma about 20 years ago (personal communication, 1967).

ARTIODACTYLA

Odocoileus virginiana (Boddaert). The white-tailed deer. Approximately five years ago this species was introduced into the mesa country. Data concerning the releases were not available. A few individuals have persisted and are now found on the Cimarron River bottom about 20 miles east of the points of release.

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