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## NOTES ON A COLLECTION OF MAMMALS FROM NORTHWESTERN IOWA.

BY ALEXANDER G. RUTHVEN AND NORMAN A. WOOD.

The University of Michigan Museum has acquired a considerable number of specimens of mammals from Northwestern Iowa during the past five years. Most of the material was obtained by the expedition of 1907, but a number of specimens have been received from residents. The museum is particularly indebted to Mr. Nels Hansen, of Ruthven, Iowa, who has sent in a considerable amount of valuable material.

The material obtained by the expedition was collected principally by Max M. Peet and A. G. Ruthven in the townships of Riverton, Sioux, Lake, Freeman and Logan, Clay County, and Lost Island and Highland, Palo Alto County.\* The miscellaneous material was taken in the same region. The habitat data in the present paper is from the field notes of A. G. Ruthven. It should also be mentioned that the specimens of *Peromyscus maniculatus bairdii*, *Microtus drummondi* (?), *Reithrodontomys griseus*, *Lepus campestris* and *Sylvilagus floridanus mearnsi* have been examined and so determined by E. W. Nelson of the U. S. Biological Survey.

## LIST OF SPECIES.

*Didelphis virginiana* (Kerr). Virginia Opossum.—No specimens of this species were observed, but various hunters and residents informed the collectors of the expedition that it is occasionally found in the region studied and an authentic record was obtained for Gillett's Grove, Gillett's Grove Township, Clay County. Of its occurrence in Nebraska, Swenk\*\* says, "The Opossum is a typical Carolinian animal which formerly was uncommon in this state and found only in the extreme southeastern portion, but of recent years it has extended its range along the wooded tributaries of the Missouri until it is now present along nearly the whole eastern edge of the state." It has probably entered the region studied by way of the timber zone along the Little Sioux River and tributary streams.

*Citellus tridecemlineatus* (Mitchell). Thirteen-striped Spermophile.—A series of twenty-seven specimens was obtained by the expedition. As was to be expected, the species is very common in this part of the state. It was found in every area of prairie and meadow land examined. The specimens are very large. The average measurements of four males are: length 286 mm., tail 101 mm., foot 40 mm., and of seven females: length 277 mm., tail 96 mm., foot 40 mm., while the three largest Michigan specimens in the museum collection only average, length 260 mm., tail 85 mm., foot 36 mm. In color they cannot be distinguished from Michigan specimens. One individual was observed eating a house mouse which was covered with fresh blood.

\*For a description of the habitats in this region see Ruthven, A. G., Contributions to the Herpetology of Iowa, Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., XVII, pp. 198-204.

\*\*A Preliminary Review of the Mammals of Nebraska. Studies from Zool. Lab. Univ. of Nebraska, No. 39, p. 14.

*Citellus franklini* (Sabine). Franklin's Spermophile.—Ten specimens of this spermophile were taken in eastern Clay County by the museum collectors. The species is less common than *C. tridecemlineatus* but is far from rare. It is apparently rarer than it is, as the individuals occur principally in colonies and usually retreat to the burrows on the first suspicion of danger.

*Mus musculus* Linnaeus. House Mouse.—Common everywhere about buildings.

*Peromyscus maniculatus bairdii* (Hoy and Kennicott). Baird's Field Mouse. (Michigan Mouse).—Nine specimens of this species were secured by the expedition. They were found in burrows in stubble fields, pastures, and on the shores of lakes.

*Reithrodontomys griseus* (Bailey). Little Gray Harvest Mouse.—An adult male was taken by Ruthven, August 22, 1907, in a stubble field in western Palo Alto County.

*Microtus drummondi* (Audubon and Bachman)? Prairie Meadow Vole.—A single specimen thus identified by E. W. Nelson was taken (1907) in a low meadow in Clay County. Only the skull was saved.

*Fiber zibethicus* (Linnaeus). Musk Rat.—The musk rat is very abundant in Clay and Palo Alto Counties, as might be inferred from the numerous lakes. All of the sloughs and perennial ponds still contain numbers of houses. Three specimens were secured by the museum expedition.

*Geomys bursarius* (Shaw). Shaw's Pocket Gopher.—Three specimens were collected in 1907. The species is abundant throughout the region, on the prairie, in pastures, and in cultivated fields—particularly along the fences. It seems to avoid the low meadows, being found only on the higher and dryer ground.

*Sylvilagus floridanus mearnsi* (Allen). Mearn's Cottontail.—Twelve specimens were obtained by the museum expedition. The cottontail is abundant in all of the land habitats both wooded and grass-covered.

*Lepus campestris* (Bachman). White-tailed Jack Rabbit.—Three specimens were secured by the museum expedition in eastern Clay County and six by Nels Hansen in western Palo Alto County. This hare is yearly becoming more rare in the region studied. At present it seems to be principally confined to the restricted areas of original prairie during the summer months, but is frequently found in the cultivated fields in the winter. Within a few years it will probably be entirely extinct in Clay and Palo Alto Counties.

*Canis latrans* Say. Barking Coyote.—The coyote was formerly quite common in Clay and Palo Alto Counties, but it is now practically extinct. About twenty years ago Ruthven saw several litters of pups that were taken near Lost Island Lake in Palo Alto County.

*Taxidea taxus* (Schreber). Badger.—No badgers were observed by the museum expedition, but this is no indication of their abundance in view of the secretive habits of the species. Ruthven observed it many times both in Clay and Palo Alto Counties previous to 1903, and it is with little doubt still to be found in favorable habitats.

*Chincha hudsonica* (Richardson). Northern Plains Skunk.—Two specimens apparently referable to this species were secured by the museum expedition. The species is common and generally distributed in the two counties.

*Spilogale interrupta* (Rafinesque). Prairie Spotted Skunk. Four specimens were obtained from the vicinity of Ruthven, on December 5, 1908, December 10, 1910, November, 1911, and April, 1912. The first three were taken by Hansen. The species (locally known as the "civit cat" or "little spotted skunk") is very common in Clay and Palo Alto Counties. In the fall it is often found about farm buildings. It is chiefly nocturnal, and generally has little fear of man. A large male measures as follows: length 555 mm., tail 225 mm., hind foot 55 mm. A female taken near Ruthven, in November, 1911, measures as follows: length 485 mm., tail vertebrae 180 mm., hind foot 48 mm.

*Putorius longicaudus* (Bonaparte). Long-tailed Weasel.—Hansen secured an adult male near Ruthven, December 5, 1908, which measures: length 555 mm., tail 220 mm., foot 55 mm.

*Lasiurus cinereus* (Beauvois). Hoary Bat.—A single specimen was taken by Nels Hansen, August 18, 1911, in a grove in Palo Alto County. This adult female weighed 3 ounces and measured as follows: length 145 mm., tail 60 mm., hind foot 15 mm.