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Some Mammals of an Eastern Nebraska Prairie

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The study on which this paper is based was conducted on a piece of original prairie, containing about 320 acres, located nine miles northwest of Lincoln.

The material for this paper is based upon observations made during the years 1928 to 1930, and upon the animals caught in traps from March 27 to April 19, 1929. Mousetraps, baited with dry oatmeal, were used for the smaller mammals and a steel and a Maccabee trap employed for some of the larger species. Most of the traps were set on a low, level part of the prairie and in the near-by shallow ravines. Some were set on the high prairie, but there the animal life was not abundant. During the month of April there seemed to be an upward migration of rodents from the low prairie.

For a part of the material the writer was aided by Grace Kiernan Weber (Mrs. Walter J.), who worked with him and used a part of this material for a thesis.

The most abundant of all the animals trapped was the Baird white-footed mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus bairdi*) (31.7%), with the prairie meadow mouse (*Microtus ochrogaster*) (29.26%) a close second, and the northern white-footed mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis*) (17.08%) third.

The following is a list of the mammals that were either caught or seen close enough to identify:

1. Little Short-tailed Shrew. *Cryptotis parva* (Say). One specimen was captured, on April 19, close to the runway of *M. ochrogaster*.

2. Large Short-tailed Shrew. *Blarina brevicauda brevicauda* (Say). Only one specimen was taken, April 19, on the low prairie, near the road.

3. Prairie Spotted Skunk. *Spilogale interrupta* (Rafinesque). On April 3, a steel trap, baited with old liver, was set in an opening in the side of a ravine bank. It was not molested until April 11, when this species was taken.

4. Say Coyote *Canis latrans* (Say). During 1928 one was seen on May 1 and May 24. In early September several were heard at night. In 1929, on March 14, the author came within thirty feet of one scared out of a bushy ravine. It ran about two hundred feet, stopped to look back, and then ran up over a hill on the prairie.

5. Thirteen-striped Ground Squirrel. *Citellus tridecemlineatus tridecemlineatus* (Mitchill). The earliest these animals were observed was March 29 and the latest was October 25. In the summer, when the grass is long, they are almost impossible to see on the prairie. During October those seen were fat and rather ungainly in their movements.

6. Shaw Pocket Gopher. *Geomys bursarius* (Shaw). During 1928 the earliest work noted was on April 26 and the latest in the year was on October 25. In 1929 the first activity was noticed on March 21 and it continued until November. New mounds were generally seen on the low prairie before they were noticed on the high prairie. The first activity in the spring is just outside of a cluster of old mounds. On April 13 two Maccabee traps were placed in an open mound and the animal caught by the next day.

7. Kansas Pocket Mouse. *Perognathus hispidus paradoxus* (Merriam). Two specimens were caught on April 3, on the low prairie near a ravine.

8. Little Gray Harvest Mouse. *Reithrodontomys albescens griseus* (Bailey). Only one specimen was caught, on April 13, in a ravine.

9. Baird White-footed Mouse. *Peromyscus maniculatus bairdi* (Hoy and Kennicott). The earliest capture record was on March 27, when one adult and one immature form were taken. Others were captured as follows: March 27, two in a ravine; April 3, one near a haystack and two on the low prairie; April 13, one on low prairie near a ravine; April 18, five in the upper end of a ravine; and on April 19, two on the low prairie. In April there seems to be a movement of this species up the slope toward the high prairie.

10. Northern White-footed Mouse. *Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis* (Fischer). Seven specimens were captured as follows: March 27, three on the low prairie; April 3, four in a ravine near a clump of sumac bushes.

11. Ord Meadow Mouse. *Microtus pennsylvanicus pennsylvanicus* (Ord). Only two were captured, within a day of each other, one on April 12 on the low prairie, and the other on April 13 in a near-by ravine.

12. Prairie Meadow Mouse. *Microtus ochrogaster* (Wagner). Twelve were taken during the spring, as follows: April 13, one in a ravine; April 18, two in the upper end of the ravine and one on the bank; April 19, two on the low prairie, five among some sumac bushes in a ravine and two in a bunch of tall, dead grass.

13. Great Plains Jack-rabbit. *Lepus californicus melanotis* (Mearns). Only one was seen and that on June 30, in a bushy ravine.

14. Mearns Cottontail. *Sylvilagus floridanus mearnsi* (Allen). Many were seen throughout the study of the prairie fauna, always being scared out of the bushy ravines.