

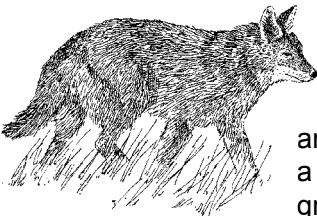
Muskrat

The muskrat is a large aquatic cousin to the vole. A versatile home builder, it may excavate a bank den along a stream or build a lodge of vegetation and mud in a pond or marsh. The muskrat feeds on a variety of aquatic plants, especially cattails. It can stay submerged for up to 15 minutes.



Coyote

Not long after sunset the yips and yowls of this predominantly prairie animal may be heard in every county in Indiana. As with other wild canines, both parents participate in raising the young. The coyote is a predator at the top of the food chain, hunting rabbits, birds, mice and other small animals. They are not a threat to healthy, grown deer.



Red Fox

Gray Fox
The red fox has a white-tipped tail, while the gray fox has a black-tipped tail. Due to an absence of any early records, there was some question about the red fox's status as a native species. Some believed it was introduced from Europe. Today, most mammalogists consider it to be a North American native. The fox diet includes small animals such as mice, rabbits, birds and large insects, plus occasional plant and fruit items. Their arching predatory pounce is an unforgettable sight.



Raccoon

From the Algonquin Indian word "arakunem" meaning "hand-scratcher," the raccoon is thought to wash food to make it easier to swallow. Preferring stream or pond environments, raccoons feed on crayfish, frogs, insects, fruits and berries. Around people they are very bold, and no food-bearing picnic cooler or garbage can is safe from their nimble paws.

Mink

This large member of the weasel family is well known for its lustrous brown fur. A "boar" mink (male) will occupy a territory for about 10 months, then move to establish another. Using its keen sense of smell, the mink forages at night for frogs, fish and other aquatic animals. Though mainly nocturnal, mink move about and may sometimes be seen on cloudy days.



Striped Skunk

Infamous creature of the night, the skunk feeds widely on insects, grubs, bird eggs, small animals, nuts and fruit. If its bluff of shuffling and growling fails to ward off a threat, the skunk may bend its body into a U shape, with both head and rear facing the intruder, and unleash the foul, lingering spray that we all recognize. This defense is accurate up to 15 feet.



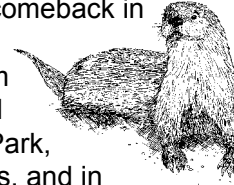
White-tailed Deer

Indiana's original deer herd was eliminated from the state by the year 1900. Reintroduction started in 1934, leading to the present-day statewide abundance. Deer feed year-round on the buds and young stems of trees and bushes. In spring and summer their diet also

includes lush green plants, with nuts and fruits added in autumn. One to three fawns are born in spring after the autumn mating season.

River Otters? Bobcats?

The river otter is making a comeback in Indiana, thanks to the DNR. River otters, once gone from the state, were reintroduced at Tippecanoe River State Park, Patoka and Salamonie lakes, and in several river systems throughout the state.



Populations of the Eastern bobcat, once thought to be nearly gone from the state, are being monitored closely in southern Indiana by the Division of Fish & Wildlife.

Extirpated Mammals

These mammals are well known from our country's history and cultural lore. They inhabited wilderness Indiana but were eliminated by settlement.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Porcupine | Fisher |
| Black Bear | Gray (Timber) Wolf |
| Elk | Bison (Buffalo) |
| Mountain Lion | |

More Information

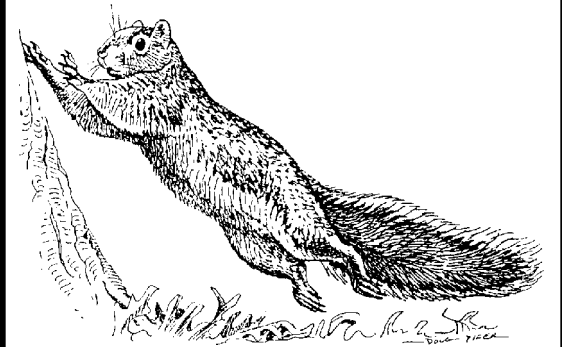
There are many books to help you identify mammals and understand their habits and habitats. These include:

- *Peterson Field Guide to Mammals*
- *Stokes Guide to Animal Tracking and Behavior*
- *Mammals of Indiana*
- *Peterson Field Guide to Animal Tracks*
- *A Key-Guide to Mammal Skulls and Lower Jaws*
- *Audubon Society Pocket Guide to Mammals*

The mission of the Interpretive Services is to provide information and offer interpretive experiences with Indiana's natural and cultural resources to visitors, staff and a diverse public.

COMMON Mammals

of INDIANA STATE PARKS



Fox Squirrel



Memories made naturally.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Division of State Parks
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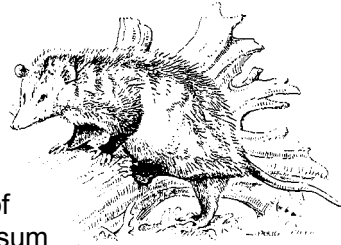
Our Wildlife Heritage

Historically, Indiana contained prairie grasslands, deciduous forests, and wetlands such as wet prairies, marshes and swamps. These natural plant communities were home to 62 species of mammals. Today these habitat types remain, but in greatly diminished fragmented parcels quite unlike the vast expanses of earlier days. Now, 55 mammal species are known to inhabit the state. The Division of State Parks manages 177,000 acres of land representing all three major habitat types. This list includes the mammals that you are most apt to see.

Avoid approaching a wild animal too closely. It is against Indiana law for visitors to feed wild animals on DNR lands. Enjoy them from a distance—and remember that they are wild.

Virginia Opossum

The “possum” is North America’s only marsupial or pouched animal, related to the kangaroos of Australia. An opossum is so small at birth that two dozen could fit in a teaspoon. The young stay in the pouch, nursing and growing for 10 weeks. Of course, the opossum is famous for its “playing dead” defense, complete with gaping mouth and limp body.

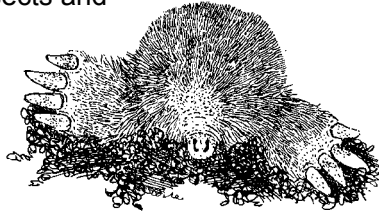


Short-tailed Shrew

Among the smallest of mammals, this 4-inch long sprite weighs only as much as six pennies. The shrew has an enormous appetite for insects, earthworms, slugs and snails, and eats almost double its weight in food daily.

Eastern Mole

The mole uses powerful front legs with broad feet to burrow a few inches beneath the woodland surface (or perhaps your lawn) in search of insects and worms. Active year-round, it may easily eat half its weight in food daily to fuel its strenuous lifestyle.

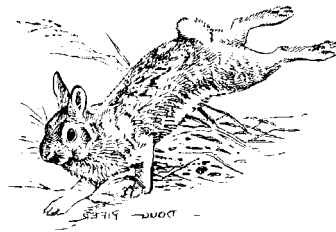


Bats

Of the 12 species of bats known to occur in Indiana, the big brown bat, *Eptesicus fuscus*, and little brown, *Myotis lucifugus*, are the most familiar. They are the “attic bats.” Red bats, *Lasiurus borealis*, are also common. Bats are the only mammals capable of true flight. They have good eyes, but use the echoes of high-pitched vocalizations to direct their night flight and insect foraging. The enormous number of insects bats consume directly benefits our agricultural interests. Contrary to popular belief, few bats carry rabies.

Eastern Cottontail Rabbit

Rabbits are most active from sunset to sunrise (nocturnal). Food preferences include lush green plants and the buds and bark of woody plants. Females line bowl-shaped nests with fur and grasses, annually producing several litters of four or five young each. Leave baby rabbits alone. Their mother is not far away, even if you can’t see her.



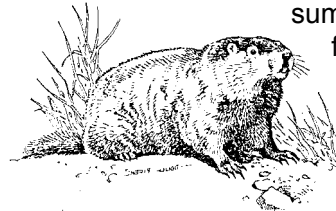
Eastern Chipmunk

This small ground squirrel with the white “racing stripe” has a habit of cocking its tail straight up as it runs. Listen in forest areas for their high-pitched “chip” that sounds the alarm of your presence.



Woodchuck

The woodchuck (groundhog) awaking from hibernation is celebrated in American folklore as a sign of winter’s end. It is the largest of North America’s true hibernators. In late summer the woodchuck feeds constantly, putting on the half-inch of body fat that will sustain it during the coming winter.



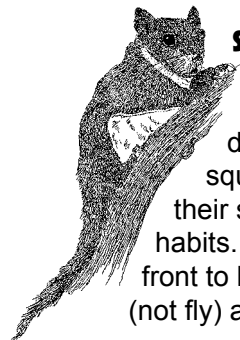
Fox Squirrel Gray Squirrel

The orange-flanked fox squirrel prefers open wood lots and forest edges. Gray squirrels are denizens of the deep, unbroken forest. In today’s fragmented woodlands both may be found in overlapping home ranges. It was the gray squirrel that figured so highly in pioneer table fare.



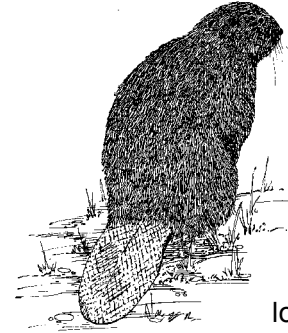
Southern Flying Squirrel

Feeding by night and sleeping in hollow tree dens by day, these small squirrels are rarely seen due to their strictly nocturnal (nighttime) habits. Flaps of skin running from front to back legs allow them to glide (not fly) among the trees.



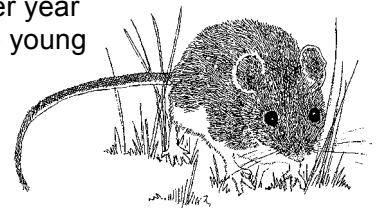
Beaver

Weighing 30 to 70 pounds, the beaver is Indiana’s largest rodent. A broad flat tail, webbed feet, and special ear and nose valves equip the beaver for life in ponds and streams. A single beaver can fell hundreds of trees each year to provide food and material for lodges and dams.



White-footed Mouse

Unlike the gray house mouse that is an import from Europe, these native mice possess white bellies and brown fur above. Nests of soft grasses and downy materials are often found in low tree cavities, wood piles, and even atop low-lying bird nests in bushes. White-footed mice may have three or four litters per year with four or five young per litter. They are endlessly pursued as food by predators.



Meadow Vole

These small mouse-like mammals of meadows and grassy areas are among the most prolific breeders in nature. Litters of four to seven young are produced almost monthly from March to December, with the young weaned at 12 days and capable of reproducing at 25 days old. As with the mice, voles figure highly in the diets of predators such as hawks and foxes.

