

THE OTHER SMALL MAMMALS



1. Flying Squirrels
2. Deer Mice
3. Jumping Mice
4. Southern Bog Lemming
5. Voles
6. Shrews
7. Moles
8. Star-Nose Mole

For more information on these other small mammal species, visit the NYSDEC website at: www.dec.ny.gov



Beaver

Front:
2" x 2"
Hind:
5" x 5 1/2"

Muskrat

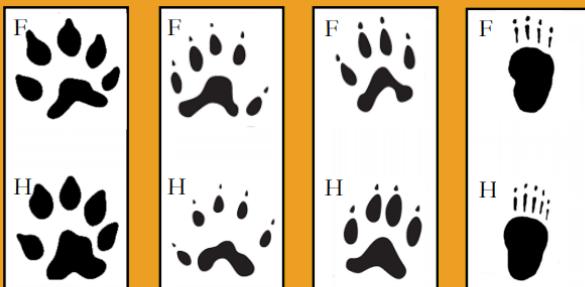
Front:
1 1/4" x 1 1/2"
Hind:
3 1/2" x 2"

Otter

Front:
3 1/2" x 3 1/4"
Hind:
3 1/4" x 3 1/4"

Mink

Front:
1" x 1 1/2"
Hind:
1" x 1 1/2"



Fisher

Front:
2 1/4" x 2 1/4"
Hind:
2 1/4" x 2 1/4"

LT Weasel

Front:
3/4" x 3/4"
Hind:
3/4" x 3/4"

ST Weasel

Front:
3/4" x 3/4"
Hind:
3/4" x 3/4"

Porcupine

Front:
1 1/4" x 1 1/4"
Hind:
2 1/4" x 1 1/4"

FAQ: BEAVER, TEETH, ID'ING SWIMMERS, ETC.

Q: What triggers beaver to build dams? **A:** Beaver are triggered by the sound of running water. Dams that are knocked out or damaged can be repaired in days or hours.

Q: Do rodent front teeth really keep growing? **Why?** **A:** Yes, rodent teeth grow their whole lives and must be worn down because, unlike our teeth, rodent teeth don't have roots. **Q:** Was that a swimming beaver or muskrat I saw? **A:** Both Beaver and muskrat swim with most of their body flat, but besides size, beaver will have visible ears. Muskrat will not.

Q: Was that a swimming otter or mink I saw? **A:** Otter have a rounded nose and often swim only with heads and necks exposed whereas mink swim with more of their body visible.

Q: Are there nutria AKA coypu here? **A:** No. Nutria are an invasive, semiaquatic rodent - like a large muskrat - that has infested the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts. They are not in NY.

Q: Do flying squirrels really fly? **A:** No. Flying squirrels cannot truly fly, but rather glide long distances from tree to tree. Bats are the only mammals that can truly fly.

DISEASE RABIES

Rabies is a viral central nervous system disease in mammals, transmitted in saliva, usu. by a bite from an infected animal.

Vectors: Any mammal can become infected w/ rabies but its most often in bats, raccoons, skunks, coyotes and foxes.

Symptoms: no fear, hyper-aggressiveness, self-mutilation. No coordination, drooling, paralysis, difficulty breathing.

Human health risk: serious; can be transmitted to humans and pets and is almost always fatal w/o post-exposure treatment.

Harvesting: These species are protected in NYS. They may be harvested in season per NYS Regulations. For more, see: www.dec.ny.gov. Hunting at West Point is coordinated thru and harvests reported at : www.westpoint.isportsman.net

BASIC WILDLIFE SAFETY REVIEW

Do these things to keep people and animals safe:

- **NEVER FEED WILDLIFE** - Nuisance animal issues often begin over food. Feeding wild animals is illegal.
- **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE** - Never approach, corner or handle wildlife. Risks incl. disease, bite, & scratch.
- **REPORT ANIMAL ISSUES** - Call a wildlife responder if human or animal well-being is a concern.

REPORTING WILDLIFE ISSUES

Know when and what to report and who to contact

- **WHEN:** Call right away If you see wildlife 1) being handled by people 2) being fed or baited. 3) hurt, sick or acting odd. 4) has been harvested illegally.
- **WHAT:** Be sure to say: 1) when and 2) where wildlife issue happened, 3) what the animal did 4) where animal (if known), 5) your name, phone number.
- **CALL:** For a bat indoors: Service Desk (315) 774-9240 or Balfort Beatty/ODIA. Other issues: MP Desk: (845) 938-3333 (anytime) NRS: (646) 208-9431(M-F 0745-1630)



OTHER MAMMALS OF WEST POINT

And the rest! In the five West Point mammal brochures we have put out before this one, we covered a wide range of species. Here, we touch upon most of the remaining, less frequently seen mammals with a focus on the larger rodents (beaver, muskrat, and even porcupine) as well as our resident mustelids (members of Mustelidae, the weasel family) - otter, fisher, mink, and three other weasel species.

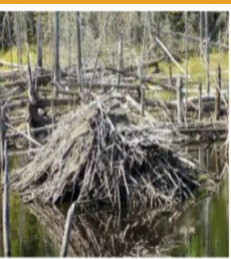
In this brochure we include a short description of each of these nine species including pictures and brief summaries of their appearance, ecology, habitat, range, and diet. Over the final couple pages, we also list and show pictures of some of the other small mammals (small rodents, shrews, and moles) native to West Point, but we do not have the space here to describe those small mammal species.

We hope this material proves useful in identifying and better understanding these species but this brochure is by no means a comprehensive guide. For more information on the mustelids, rodents, and small mammals discussed here, visit the NYSDEC website at: www.dec.ny.gov.

NORTH AMERICAN BEAVER (*Castor canadensis*)



- The beaver is New York's state mammal. Mid-sized for a mammal (2 ½ - 3 ft long plus tail, 30 - 50+ lbs.) it is also one of the world's largest rodents.
- They have thick, brown double-coated fur and thick fat for insulation, large front incisors, a large flat paddle-shaped tail, and webbed hind feet.
- Beavers are semiaquatic mammals living in lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams. They are nocturnal but can be seen in evening as they become active.
- Beaver live alone, in pairs or small family units, but multiple family units can form larger colonies. They mate once a year producing a litter of 3-6 kits.
- Beaver range from Alaska and northern Canada, throughout the U.S. to northern Mexico. They eat mostly woody plants and weeds, waterlilies, etc.



LODGES & DAMS: Beaver are most famous for cutting down trees and shrubs to eat and build their dams and lodges with. Beaver have evolved to build lodges - shelters they live in - for protection from predators and dams to flood areas for protection by isolation, flooding the access to their lodges.

CONSERVATION SUCCESS STORY: Over-trapping severely limited beaver in range, threatened to drive them extinct in NY by the early 1900s. Since then, regulations have let beaver recover in population size and range.

COMMON MUSKRAT (*Ondatra zibethicus*)



The muskrat is a small to mid-sized (1-2 ft long, 1-5 lbs) semi-aquatic rodent. It has a thick brown coat, a long, scaly tail, and partially webbed hind feet. Muskrats live in marshes, ponds, lakes, rivers and streams. They can be active any time but are most active at night. They live in small reed lodges or in dens. Muskrats are mostly herbivores eating cattails, lillies, and other aquatic plants but also eat fish, frogs, clams and snails.

NORTH AMERICAN RIVER OTTER (*Lontra canadensis*)



The otter is a mid-sized (3-4 ft, 10-30 lbs) semi-aquatic mammal and large mustelid. It has a long, sleek body and flat head, thick dark brown fur and tan-gray muzzle and throat. Otters are great swimmers and live along water in dens they dig often with entrances on land and in water. Otters eat fish, frogs, turtles, rodents and crayfish. The otter is a rare but amusing sight, often bodysurfing or playing alone or in groups.

AMERICAN MINK (*Mustela vison*)



The mink is a small to mid-sized (1 ½ - 2 ½ ft, 1-4 lb) mammal, a mustelid with dark brown fur and white chin/throat patch. Mink are great swimmers and live and hunt along lakes, streams, and wetlands. They are mostly nocturnal but can be seen in day. Their favorite prey is muskrat but they also eat fish, frogs, turtles, rodents, and birds.

KEYSTONE SPECIES: Beaver are a textbook keystone species greatly affecting a habitat in even small numbers. By damming, they create aquatic and wetland habitats affecting other plants and animal species that live there.

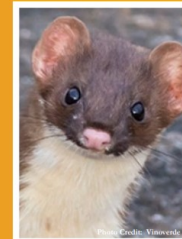
FISHER (*Pekania pennanti*)



The fisher is a mid-sized (3-4 ft, 5-20 lbs) mammal and large mustelid. It has a long, sleek body and broad head, thick dark brown-black fur and long bushy tail. They live mostly in coniferous or mixed hardwood forests. They hunt large home ranges for mice, squirrels, rabbits or its favorite prey - porcupine. Fisher are rare but occasional visitors to West Point. Please report any sightings of it to Natural Resources.

LONG-TAILED WEASEL (*Mustela frenata*)

This weasel is a small to mid-sized (1-2 ft, ½-1 lb) mustelid incl 3-6" tail. It has a long body, short legs and brown fur with a white to yellow underside. In winter, in its north-most range its coat turns all white. They live in forests, brush, or fields and are often found somewhat near water. Long-tailed weasels are active both day and night and eat voles, mice, chipunks, birds etc.



SMALL-TAILED WEASEL (*Mustela erminea*)



This weasel, also known as an ermine or stoat, is a small (½-1 ft, ½ lb) mustelid with a 2-3" tail. It has a long body, short legs, brown fur and white underside. In winter, in its north-most range its coat becomes all white. They live in open forests and fields. They are active in both day and night and hunt voles, mice, birds and their eggs. Like other weasels, they are rarely seen.

LEAST WEASEL (*Mustela nivalis*)

The least weasel is a small mammal (~½ ft, 1-2 oz. with a ~1" tail) and the world's smallest mustelid. It has a thin body, short legs, and brown fur with a white underside. They live in open forests and fields. They are active in both day and night and hunt over small, 1-2 acre home ranges for mice and other small mammals as well as for small birds and their eggs.



NORTH AMERICAN PORCUPINE (*Erethizon dorsatum*)

The porcupine is a mid-sized mammal (2-3 ft, 5-40 lbs.) with a high-arched back, short legs, brown-black fur and silvery gray front guard hairs (pictured on the front cover of this brochure lower right). Porcupine are renown for their quills, up to 30,000, on their rump and tail used for defense. They live in forests, browsing twigs and bark and green plants. Porcupine are rare at West Point. Please report any sightings at West Point of this rare animal to Natural Resources.