

FLORIDA SALT MARSH VOLE

Microtus pennsylvanicus dukecampbelli



Order: Rodentia
Family: Cricetidae
FNAI Ranks: G5T1/S1
U.S. Status: Endangered
FL Status: Endangered

Description: A medium-sized rodent (total length: 7.3 in. = 185 mm) with a short tail (approximately 2 in. = 50 mm) and a short, broad snout. Hair is dark brown above and silvery gray below. Ears are small and may be obscured by hair.

Similar Species: Distinguished from other subspecies by its larger size, but this is not an issue because the closest population occurs in coastal South Carolina. Cotton rat (*Sigmodon hispidus*) has a long tail (3 - 6 in. = 75 -166 mm) and grizzled appearance. Rice rat (*Oryzomys palustris*) also has a long tail (about as long as the body). Woodland vole (*Microtus pinetorum*) is much smaller, generally not exceeding 5.7 in. (145 mm).

Habitat: Poorly known, but apparently uses saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) meadows adjacent to black needlerush (*Juncus roemerianus*) and may avoid areas with smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*).

Seasonal Occurrence: Year-round resident.

Florida Distribution: This species is known from only one locality in Levy County in the vicinity of Cedar Key.

Range-wide Distribution: Same as Florida distribution. Other subspecies occur from coastal South Carolina through the mid-Atlantic states north throughout Canada and into Alaska.

Conservation Status: Only known occurrence is on private land; efforts to find in adjacent areas have been unsuccessful. Population may be susceptible to storm surge.

Protection and Management: Management needs are unknown; however,

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saltgrass seems to be an important habitat character.

References: Brown 1997, Humphrey (ed.) 1992, Woods et al. 1982.



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