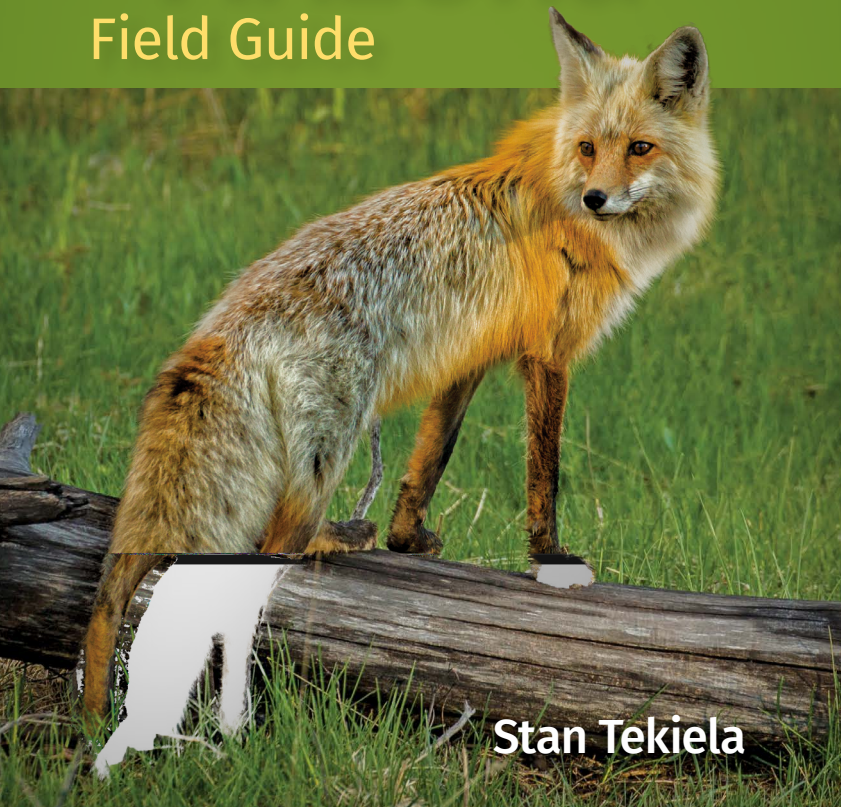


2ND EDITION

Mammals *of* Arizona

Field Guide



Stan Tekiela



Mice & Rats

pg. 39

includes shrews, voles, muskrat



Beaver

pg. 105



Bats

pg. 109



Squirrels & Gophers

pg. 117

includes chipmunks, prairie dogs



Rabbits & Hares

pg. 199



Weasels & Skunks

pg. 219

includes ferret, badger, otter



Raccoons

pg. 251

includes ringtail, coati



Porcupine & Opossum

pg. 263



Dogs

pg. 271

includes foxes, coyote, wolf



Cats

pg. 291

includes ocelot, jaguarundi, bobcat, mountain lion, jaguar



Javelina

pg. 311



Pronghorn

pg. 315



Deer

pg. 319

includes elk



Horses

pg. 331

includes burro



Sheep & Bison

pg. 339



Bear

pg. 347

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The Mammals

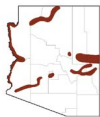
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American Beaver

Castor canadensis



Family: Beavers (Castoridae)

Size: L 3–4' (0.9–1.2 m); T 7–14" (18–36 cm)

Weight: 20–60 lb. (9–27 kg)

Description: Reddish brown fur. Body often darker than head. Large, flat, naked black tail, covered with scales. Small round ears. Large, exposed orange incisors. Tiny eyes.

Origin/Age: native; 10–15 years

Compare: Much larger than Muskrat (pg. 101), which has a long narrow tail. Look for a large flat tail to help identify the American Beaver.

Habitat: rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, ditches, elevations up to 10,000' (3,050 m) where trees and water are present

Home: den, called a lodge, hollow inside with holes on top for ventilation, 1–2 underwater entrances; beavers that live on rivers often dig burrows in riverbanks rather than constructing dens

Food: herbivore; soft bark, inner bark, aquatic plants, green leaves

Sounds: loud slap created by hitting the surface of water with the tail before diving when alarmed, chewing or gnawing sounds when feeding or felling trees

Breeding: Jan–Mar mating; 120 days gestation

Young: 1–8 kits once per year; about 1 lb. (.5 kg); born well furred with eyes open, able to swim within 1 week



tail slap



lodge



scat

Signs: dam and lodge made from large woody branches can indicate current or former activity since structures remain well after the beaver has moved on or been killed, chewed tree trunks with large amounts of wood chips at the base of trees, flattened paths through vegetation leading to and from a lake; oval pellets, 1" (2.5 cm) long, containing sawdust-like material and bark, scat seldom on land

Activity: nocturnal, crepuscular; active year-round, even under ice and when in lodge during winter

Tracks: hind paw 5" (13 cm) long with 5 toes pointing forward and a long narrow heel, forepaw 3" (7.5 cm) with 5 splayed toes; wide tail drag mark often wipes out paw prints



Stan's Notes: Largest member of the rodent order in Arizona. Body is well suited for swimming. Valves close off the ears and nostrils when underwater, and a clear membrane covers the eyes. Can remain submerged up to 15 minutes. Webbed toes on hind feet help it swim as fast as 6 mph (10 km/h). Special lips seal the mouth yet leave the front incisors exposed, allowing it to carry branches in its mouth without water getting inside. At the lodge, it eats the soft bark of smaller branches the same way we eat corn on the cob. Doesn't eat the interior wood. Stores branches for winter use by sticking them in mud on a lake or river bottom.

Has a specialized claw on each hind foot that is split like a comb and is used for grooming. Secretes a pungent oily substance (castor) from glands near the base of its tail. Castor is used to mark territories or boundaries called castor mounds.

Monogamous and mates for life. However, will take a new mate if partner is lost. Can live up to 20 years in captivity.

Young remain with parents through their first winter. They help cut and store a winter food source and maintain the dam while parents raise another set of young. Young disperse at two years.

Builds a dam to back up a large volume of water, creating a pond. Cuts trees at night by gnawing trunks. Uses larger branches to construct the dam and lodge. Cuts smaller branches and twigs of felled trees into 6-foot (1.8 m) sections. Dam repair is triggered by the sound of moving water, not by sight. Most repair activity takes place at night.

No other mammal besides humans changes its environment as much as beavers. Frogs, turtles, and many bird species, including ducks, herons, and egrets, benefit from the newly created habitat. Beaver ponds play an important role in moose populations in other areas where moose live. Moose feed on aquatic plants, cool themselves, and escape biting insects in summer in beaver ponds.





Mexican Fox Squirrel

Sciurus nayaritensis



Family: Squirrels (Sciuridae)

Size: L 14–16" (36–40 cm); T 8–12" (20–30 cm)

Weight: 1½–2½ lb. (0.7–1.1 kg)

Description: Gray with yellow and orange highlights. Bright rusty orange chin, chest, belly, and legs. Large and fluffy rust tail, may be dark with a white edge or orange or gray. Female slightly larger than male.

Origin/Age: native; 2–5 years

Compare: Red Squirrel (pg. 169) is half the size and lacks a large tail. Abert's Squirrel (pg. 173) is smaller and has large ear tufts. Rock Squirrel (pg. 165) is gray, has a smaller tail and lives mainly on the ground. This is the only large tree squirrel in Arizona's Chiricahua Mountains. Range will help identify.

Habitat: woodlands, from 5,000–8,500' (1,525–2,590 m)

Home: leaf nest (drey) in summer, up to 24" (61 cm) wide, lined with soft plant material, usually with a side entrance, in a major fork near the main trunk of a tree, in winter nest is in a tree cavity and occupied by several individuals if enough food is available, also used for birthing; may build and use up to 6 nests

Food: omnivore; nuts, corn, seeds, fruit, mushrooms, bird eggs, baby birds, mice, insects, carrion

Sounds: usually silent; barking and chucking alarm calls

Breeding: spring mating; 40–45 days gestation

Young: 2–4 offspring once per year; born with eyes closed, eyes open at about 30 days, leaves mother and is on its own at about 3 months



Signs: large leaf nests in trees, often seen feeding on the ground

Activity: diurnal; active year-round, usually begins feeding early in the morning, taking a break at midday, then active again late in the afternoon

Tracks: hind paw $2\frac{3}{4}$ –3" (7–7.5 cm) long with 5 toes, forepaw $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (4 cm) long with 4 toes; 1 set of 4 tracks; forepaws fall side by side and behind hind prints



Stan's Notes: The common name for this squirrel, "Mexican," is because it occurs mainly in Mexico. Found in the mountains of Mexico with just a thin, finger-like range extending into a very small portion of southeastern Arizona. This is the largest squirrel within its range and is the only tree squirrel in the Chiricahua Mountains living in the pine-oak forests of canyons.

Also known as Chiricahua Mountain Squirrel, Apache Squirrel, and Nayarit Squirrel. Very similar to the Eastern Fox Squirrel (not shown), which was once considered the same species, but is not found in Arizona.

A secretive squirrel that spends much of its time on the ground. Leaves the nest early in the morning and often does not return until the end of the day except on hot days, when it will return at midday for a short break. Active all year.

Spends more time farther away from trees, searching for food on the ground and traveling. Instead of quickly running up a tree to escape danger, it often freezes and tries to blend in. Reported to be clumsy in trees, sometimes falling out of a tree or slipping on the trunk.

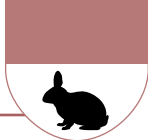
One of the only squirrels that apparently does not cache food for later consumption. Because of this it spends less time gathering and storing food than other squirrels, and more time looking for seeds, nuts, and other items to eat each day all year.





Eastern Cottontail

Sylvilagus floridanus



Family: Rabbits and Hares (Leporidae)

Size: L 14–18" (36–45 cm); T 1–2" (2.5–5 cm)

Weight: 2–4 lb. (0.9–1.8 kg)

Description: Overall gray to light brown. Black-tipped hairs give it a grizzled appearance. Usually has a small white (rarely black) spot on forehead between the ears. Large pointed ears, rarely with a black outside edge. Distinctive rusty red nape. Brown tail with a white cotton-like underside.

Origin/Age: native; 1–3 years

Compare: Since cottontails are so similar, use range to help identify. Desert Cottontail (pg. 203) is smaller and much more widespread in Arizona. Mountain Cottontail (pg. 199) occurs in the northeastern corner of the state above 6,000' (1,830 m).

Habitat: wide variety such as open fields, brush piles, rock piles, along rivers and streams, woodlands, thickets, elevations below 6,500' (1,980 m)

Home: shallow nest, lined with soft plant material and fur, covered with dry grasses and leaves

Food: herbivore; grass, dandelions, other green plants in spring and summer; saplings, twigs, bark, and other woody plants in winter

Sounds: loud high-pitched scream or squeal when caught by a predator such as a fox or coyote

Breeding: late Feb–Mar mating; 30 days gestation; starts to breed at 3 months

Young: 3–6 offspring up to 5 times per year; born naked and helpless with eyes closed



Signs: small woody twigs and branches near the ground are cleanly cut off and at an angle, while browse from deer is higher up and has a ragged edge (due to the lack of upper incisors in deer), bark is stripped off of saplings and shrubs; dry, pea-sized light brown pellets, round and woody; soft green pellets are ingested and rarely seen

Activity: nocturnal, crepuscular; often very active during late winter and early spring when males fight to breed with females

Tracks: hind paw 3–4" (7.5–10 cm) long, forepaw 1" (2.5 cm) long, small and round; 1 set of 4 tracks; forepaws fall one in front of the other behind hind prints



Stan's Notes: The most widespread of the eight cottontail species in North America, seen in the eastern United States and most of Mexico, but found only in southeastern Arizona, extending into central Arizona. Transplanted to many areas that historically did not have cottontails. Common name is for its cotton ball-like tail.

Usually stays in a small area of only a couple acres. Often freezes, hunkers down and flattens ears if danger is near. Quickly runs in a zigzag pattern, circling back to its starting spot when flushed. Able to leap up to 12–15 feet (3.7–4.5 m) in a single bound while running. Also jumps sideways while running to break its scent trail. Uses a set of well-worn trails in winter, usually in thick cover of bushes. Cools itself on hot summer days by stretching out in shaded grassy areas.

Usually not a territorial animal, with fights among males breaking out only during mating season. Interspersed with chasing, males face each other, kick with front feet, and jump high into the air.

After mating, the female excavates a small area for a nest, lines it with soft plants and fur from her chest for comfort and camouflage the entrance.

Mothers nurse their babies at dawn and dusk. Once the young open their eyes and are moving outside the nest, they are on their own and get no further

help from their mother. One of the most reproductively successful rabbit species in North America, with some females producing as many as 35 offspring annually; however, most young do not live longer than 1 year.

Like other rabbits and hares, this species produces fecal pellets that are dry and brown or soft and green. Eats the green pellets to regain the nutrition that wasn't digested initially.







Northern Raccoon

Procyon lotor



Family: Raccoons (Procyonidae)

Size: L 24–25" (61–64 cm); T 7–16" (18–40 cm)

Weight: 12–35 lb. (5.4–15.8 kg)

Description: Overall gray to brown, sometimes nearly black to silver. Distinctive black band across face (mask), eyes and down to the chin. White snout. Bushy, black-tipped brown tail with 4–6 evenly spaced dark bands or rings.

Origin/Age: native; 6–10 years

Compare: Very distinctive animal. The black mask and dark rings on the tail make it hard to confuse with any other species.

Habitat: almost all habitats, rural and urban, elevations up to 10,000' (3,050 m)

Home: hollow tree, or underground den where trees are absent

Food: omnivore; crayfish, fish, reptiles, amphibians, nuts, fruit, green leaves, suet, birdseed (especially black-oil sunflower seeds and thistle), small mammals, baby birds, bird eggs, insects

Sounds: very loud snarls, growls, hisses, and screams are common (and may be frightening) during the mating season, soft purring sounds and quiet chuckles between mothers and babies

Breeding: Feb–Jun mating; 54–65 days gestation; female in heat (estrus) for only 3–6 days

Young: 3–6 offspring per year, usually in May; born with eyes closed, leaves den at 7–8 weeks



Signs: pile of half-digested berries deposited on a log, rock, under a bird feeder or on top of a garbage can; scat is usually cylindrical, 2" (5 cm) long and $\frac{3}{4}$ " (2 cm) wide, but can be highly variable due to diet



Activity: nocturnal; active year-round except during cold snaps in winter

Tracks: hind paw $3\frac{1}{2}$ – $4\frac{1}{2}$ " (9–11 cm) long with 5 long toes and claw marks, forepaw $2\frac{1}{2}$ –3" (6–7.5 cm) long, slightly longer than wide with 5 distinct toes and claw marks; forepaws land (register) next to hind prints, 8–20" (20–50 cm) stride



Stan's Notes: Raccoons are native only to the Americas from Central America to the United States and lower Canada. Northern Raccoon is found in various parts of Arizona. Common name comes from the Algonquian Indian word *aroubcoune*, meaning "he scratches with his hands." Known for the ability to open such objects as doors, coolers, and latches. Uses its nimble fingers to feel around the edges of ponds, rivers, and lakes for crayfish and frogs. Known to occasionally wash its food before eating, hence the species name *lotor*, meaning "washer." However, it is not washing its food, but kneading and tearing it apart. The water helps it feel the parts that are edible and those that are not. A strong swimmer.

Able to climb any tree very quickly and can come down headfirst or tail end first. Its nails can grip bark no matter which way it climbs because it can rotate its hind feet nearly 180 degrees so that the hind toes always point up the tree.

Active at night, sleeping in hollow trees or other dens during the day. Often mistakenly associated with forests, but also lives in grasslands, using underground dens.

Usually a solitary animal as an adult. Does not hibernate but will sleep or simply hole up in a comfortable den from January to February. Will occasionally den in small groups of the same sex, usually males, or females without young.

Emerging from winter sleep, males wander many miles in search of a mate. Females use the same den for several months while raising their young, but move out afterward and find a new place to sleep each night. Males are not involved in raising young. Young remain with the adult female for nearly a year.







Virginia Opossum

Didelphis virginiana



Family: Opossums (Didelphidae)

Size: L 25–30" (64–76 cm); T 10–20" (25–50 cm)

Weight: 4–14 lb. (1.8–6.3 kg)

Description: Overall black. Some have a gray-to-brown body with a white head, throat, and belly. Long narrow snout. Wide mouth. Oval, naked black ears, and a pink nose. Short legs and 5 pink toes on feet. Thumb-like first toe on the hind feet lacks a nail. Long, scaly, semiprehensile, naked pinkish tail.

Origin/Age: non-native, from eastern United States; 3–5 years

Compare: Muskrat (pg. 101) is much smaller, all brown and rarely far from water. Norway Rat (pg. 91) also has a long naked tail, but Virginia Opossum is larger with large dark ears and a pink nose. Norway Rat is rarely seen in trees.

Habitat: deciduous forests, farmlands, grasslands, cities, yards, elevations up to 6,000' (1,830 m)

Home: leaf nest in an underground den or hollow log

Food: omnivore; insects, sunflower and Nyjer thistle seeds, nuts, berries, fruit, leaves, bird eggs, fish, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals, road kill, earthworms

Sounds: low growls, hisses and shows teeth if threatened, soft clicks between mothers and young

Breeding: Jan–Feb mating; 8–14 days gestation

Young: 2–13 (usually 5–6) offspring once per year; new-borns the size of a navy bean crawl to mother's external fur-lined pouch, where they attach to a nipple for as long as 2 months



in pouch



Sonoran



Sonoran

Signs: overturned garbage cans; scat on ground under sunflower seed and Nyjer thistle feeders

Activity: nocturnal; can be seen during the day in winter

Tracks: hind paw 2" (5 cm) long with 5 toes, large thumb-like first toe points inward and lacks a nail, forepaw 1½" (4 cm) long with 5 toes spread out; fore and hind prints are parallel, 7" (18 cm) stride, often has a tail drag mark



scat



Stan's Notes: The Virginia Opossum was introduced to Arizona in the early 1900s and is seen only in the southeastern part of the state. The Sonoran Opossum, a dark, nearly black variety with black feet and a black mask, moved into Arizona from Mexico and over the past two decades has become more common. Other than the overall color, there is not much difference between the Virginia and the Sonoran.

A unique-looking animal, the size of a house cat. It has 50 teeth, more than any other mammal in Arizona. In some areas the tip of its naked pink tail and ears get frostbitten during winter, turn black and fall off.

Usually solitary, moving around on the ground from place to place. Also climbs trees well, using its tail to aid in climbing, holding onto branches (semiprehensile). An adult opossum cannot hang by the tail like a monkey, but the young seem able to, perhaps due to their lighter weight.

Frequently feeds on dead animals along roads and is often hit by vehicles. Not a fast mover, it will hiss if threatened and show its short, pointy teeth. When that doesn't work, it often will roll over and feign death with eyes closed, mouth open, and tongue hanging out, "playing 'possum." Does not hibernate, but sleeps in dens for weeks during the coldest part of winter.

Males give loud, aggressive displays during the breeding season and will scent-mark by licking themselves and rubbing their heads against tree trunks or other stationary objects. Young ride on their mother's back after weaning.

Opossums can defend themselves against large predators and survive substantial injuries. One study showed nearly half of all examined dead opossums had healed broken bones, some with multiple fractures. Many opossums are immune to venomous snake bites and have a resistance to rabies and plague.





Red Fox

Vulpes vulpes



Family: Wolves, Foxes, and Coyote (Canidae)

Size: L 22–24" (56–61 cm); T 13–17" (33–43 cm); H 15–16" (38–40 cm)

Weight: 7–15 lb. (3.2–6.8 kg)

Description: Usually rusty red with dark highlights, but can vary from light yellow to black. Large pointed ears trimmed in black with white inside. White jowls, chest, and belly. Legs nearly black. Large bushy tail with a white tip. Fluffy coat in winter and spring. Molts by July, appearing smaller and thinner.

Origin/Age: native, 5–10 years

Compare: Gray Fox (pg. 275) is not as red and has a black-tipped tail. Smaller than the Coyote (pg. 283), usually more red and has a white-tipped tail. All other wild canids lack a tail with a white tip.

Habitat: forests, scrublands, rangelands, cities, suburbs, foothills, mountains, all elevations

Home: den, sometimes a hollow log, may dig a den under a log or a rock in a bank of a stream or in a hillside created when land was cut to build a road, often has a mound of dirt up to 3' (0.9 m) high in front of the main entrance with scat deposits

Food: omnivore; small mammals such as mice, voles, rabbits and hares; also eats berries, apples, nuts, fish, insects, and carrion

Sounds: hoarse high-pitched barks, yelps to steady high-pitched screams, mournful cries

Breeding: winter (Jan–Mar) mating; 51–53 days gestation

Young: 1–10 kits once per year in April or May



summer coat



winter coat



silver morph



dark morph

Signs: cylindrical scat with a tapered end, can be very dark if berries were eaten, frequently contains hair and bones, often found on a trail, prominent rock or stump or at den entrance

Activity: mainly nocturnal, crepuscular; rests during the middle of the night

Tracks: forepaw 2" (5 cm) long, oval, with hind paw slightly smaller; straight line of single tracks; hind paws fall near or directly onto fore prints (direct register) when walking, often obliterating the forepaw tracks, 10–14" (25–36 cm) stride when walking



scat



Stan's Notes: The most widely distributed of wild canids in the world, ranging across North America, Asia, Europe and northern Africa. European Red Foxes were introduced into North America in the 1790s, resulting in some confusion regarding the original distribution and lineage.

Usually alone. Very intelligent and learns from past experiences. Often catlike in behavior, pouncing on prey. Sleeps at the base of a tree or rock, even in winter, curling itself up into a ball.

Hunts for mice and other small prey by stalking, looking, and listening. Hearing differs from the other mammals. Hears low-frequency sounds, enabling it to detect small mammals digging and gnawing underground. Chases larger prey such as rabbits and squirrels. Hunts even if full, caching extra food underground. Finds cached food by memory and using its sense of smell.

Mated pairs will actively defend their territory from other foxes; however, they are often killed by coyotes or wolves. Uses a den only several weeks for birthing and raising young. Parents bring food to kits in the den. At first, parents regurgitate the food. Later, they will bring fresh meat and live prey to the den, allowing the kits to practice killing. Young are dispersed at the end of their first summer, with the males (dog foxes) traveling 100–150 miles (161–242 km), much farther than females (vixens), to establish their own territories.





male



White-tailed Deer

Odocoileus virginianus couesi



Family: Deer (Cervidae)

Size: L 3–6' (0.9–1.8 m); T 6–12" (15–30 cm); H 3–4' (0.9–1.2 m)

Weight: M 70–120 lb. (32–54 kg); F 50–75 lb. (23–34 kg)

Description: Reddish brown during summer, grayish brown during winter. Large ears, white inside with black edges. A white eye-ring, nose band, chin, throat, and belly. Brown tail with a black tip and white underside. Male has antlers with many tines and an antler spread of 12–36" (30–91 cm). Female has a thinner neck than male and lacks antlers.

Origin/Age: native; 5–10 years

Compare: Smaller and less common than the Mule Deer (pg. 323), which has a small, thin white tail with a black tip. Elk (pg. 327) has a dark mane and is much larger and heavier than White-tailed Deer.

Habitat: all habitats, all elevations

Home: no den or nest; sleeps in a different spot every night, beds may be concentrated in one area, does not use a shelter in bad weather or winter, will move to a semisheltered area (yard) with a good supply of food in winter

Food: herbivore; grasses and other green plants, acorns and nuts in summer, twigs and buds in winter

Sounds: loud whistle-like snorts, male grunts, fawn bleats

Breeding: late Oct–Nov mating; 6–7 months gestation

Young: 1–2 fawns once per year in May or June; covered with white spots, walks within hours of birth



young male



tree rub



Coues female



scat

Signs: browsed twigs that are ripped or torn (due to the lack of upper incisor teeth), tree rubs (saplings scraped or stripped of bark) made by male while polishing antlers during the rut, oval depressions in grass or leaves are evidence of beds; round, hard brown pellets during winter, segmented cylindrical masses of scat in spring and summer

Activity: nocturnal, crepuscular; often moves along same trails to visit feeding areas

Tracks: front hoof 2-3" (5-7.5 cm) long, hind hoof slightly smaller, both with a split heart shape with the point in the front; neat line of single tracks; hind hooves fall near or directly onto fore prints (direct register) when walking



Stan's Notes: Almost extirpated in the 1920s. It has recovered well and is now found in most river bottoms in southeastern Arizona. In Arizona the White-tailed Deer is actually a subspecies known as Coues White-tailed Deer. Coues Whitetails look the same as White-tailed Deer (*O. virginianus*), their eastern counterpart, except that they are smaller and weigh less. Also called Virginia Deer or just Whitetail.



Much longer guard hairs in winter give the animal a larger appearance than in summer. Individual hairs of the winter coat are thick and hollow and provide excellent insulation.

In summer, antlers are covered with a furry skin called velvet. Velvet contains a network of blood vessels that supplies nutrients to the growing antlers. New antler growth begins after the male (buck) drops his antlers in January or February. Some females (does) have been known to grow antlers.

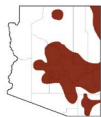
Deer are dependent on the location of the food supply. In winter large groups move to low moist areas (yards) that have plenty of food. Yarding behavior provides some protection from predators. Eats 5–9 pounds (2.3–4.1 kg) of food per day, preferring acorns in fall and fresh grass in spring. Its four-chambered stomach enables the animal to get nutrients from poor food sources, such as twigs, and eat and drink substances that are unsuitable for people.

Able to run up to 37 mph (60 km/h), jump up to 8½ feet (2.6 m) high and leap 30 feet (9.1 m). Also an excellent swimmer.

The buck is solitary in spring and early summer, but seeks other bucks in late summer and early fall to spar. Bucks are polygamous. The largest, most dominant bucks mate with many does.

For a couple weeks after birth, fawns lay still all day while their mother is away feeding. Mother nurses them evenings and nights.





Black Bear

Ursus americanus



Family: Bears (Ursidae)

Size: L 4½–6' (1.4–1.8 m); T 3–7" (7.5–18 cm); H 3–3½' (0.9–1.1 m)

Weight: M 100–900 lb. (45–405 kg); F 90–525 lb. (41–236 kg)

Description: Nearly all black, sometimes brown, tan or cinnamon. Short round ears. Light brown snout. May have a small white patch on its chest. Short tail, which often goes unnoticed.

Origin/Age: native; 15–30 years

Compare: The only bear species in Arizona.

Habitat: all forest types, grasslands, elevations over 6,000' (1,830 m)

Home: den, underneath a fallen tree or in a rock crevice or cave; may dig a den 5–6' (1.5–1.8 m) deep with a small cavity at the end; male sometimes hibernates on the ground without shelter

Food: omnivore; leaves, nuts, roots, fruit, berries, grass, insects, fish, small mammals, carrion

Sounds: huffs, puffs, or grunts and groans when walking, loud snorts made by air forced from nostrils, loud roars when fighting and occasionally when mating, motor-like humming when content

Breeding: Jun–Jul mating; 60–90 days gestation; implantation delayed until November after mating

Young: 1–5 (usually 2) cubs once every other year in January or February; born covered with fine dark fur, weighing only ½–1 lb. (0.2–0.5 kg)



claw marks

brown morph

Signs: series of long narrow scars on tree trunks, usually as high as the bear can reach, made by scratching and biting, rub marks with snagged hair on the lower part of tree trunks or on large rocks, made by rubbing and scratching when shedding its winter coat; large dark cylindrical scat or piles of loose scat, usually contains berries and nuts, may contain animal hair, undigested plant stems and roots



scat

Activity: diurnal, nocturnal; often seen feeding during the day

Tracks: hind paw 7–9" (18–23 cm) long, 5" (13 cm) wide with 5 toes, turns inward slightly, looks like a human track, forepaw 4" (10 cm) long, 5" (13 cm) wide with 5 toes, claw marks on all feet; fore and hind prints are parallel, hind paws fall several inches in front of fore prints; shuffles feet when walking



Stan's Notes: The Black Bear is unique to North America. Has a shuffling gait and frequently appears clumsy. It is not designed for speed, but can run up to 30 mph (48 km/h) for short distances. A powerful swimmer, however, and good at climbing trees. It has color vision, but poor eyesight and relies on smell to find most of its food. Often alone except for mating in early summer or when bears gather at a large food supply such as a garbage dump. Feeds heavily throughout summer, adding layers of fat for hibernation.

Hibernates up to five months per year starting in late fall. Heart rate drops from 70 to 10–20 beats per minute. Body temperature drops only 1–12°F (–17°C to –11°C), which is not enough to change mental functions. Doesn't eat, drink, pass feces, or urinate during hibernation, yet can be roused and will move around in the den. The female can lose up to 40 percent of her body weight during hibernation.

Male has a large territory of up to 15 square miles (39 sq. km) that often encompasses several female territories. Males fight each other for breeding rights and usually have scars from fights. The male bear matures at 3–4 years of age, but doesn't reach full size until 10–12 years. Males do not take part in raising young.

The female bear doesn't breed until it is 2–3 years of age. Females that have more body fat when entering hibernation will have more cubs than females with less fat. If a female does not have enough fat, she will not give birth. Mother bears, which average 177 pounds (80 kg), are approximately 250 times the size of newborns. A short gestation and tiny cubs are the result of the reproductive process during hibernation.



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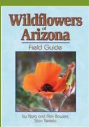
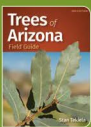
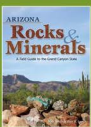
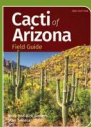
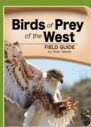
Organized by family and featuring full-color photographs and helpful information, this is your complete guide to mammals in Arizona!



About the Author

Naturalist Stan Tekiela is an award-winning wildlife photographer and the author of many popular state-specific field guides. He has written educational books about wildlife, including children's books, quick guides, and more, presenting birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, trees, wildflowers, and cacti.

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