

GULF SALT MARSH MINK

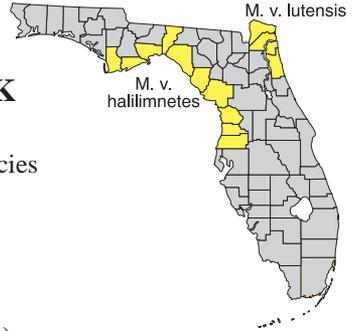
Mustela vison halilimnetes

ATLANTIC SALT MARSH MINK

Mustela vison lutensis

The taxonomic distinctness of these subspecies is questionable.

Order:	Carnivora
Family:	Mustelidae
FNAI Ranks:	G5T3/S3 (both subspecies)
U.S. Status:	None (both subspecies)
FL Status:	None (both subspecies)



© L.D. Mech, Mammal Images Library

Description: Medium-sized (19 - 28 in. = 491 - 720 mm) members of the weasel family with the characteristic long, slender body, short legs, small head with rounded ears, and long (6 - 8 in. = 153 - 200 mm), somewhat bushy tail. Fur is dark brown over most of the body and blackish brown on the distal half of the tail. Many specimens have a white patch on the chin or the chest.

Similar Species: Long-tailed weasel (*Mustela frenata*) is smaller (in Florida, generally not exceeding 19 in. = 483 mm) and has a white underside. Otter (*Lutra canadensis*) is larger (generally exceeding 35 in. = 889 mm) and has a longer tail (generally exceeding 12 in. = 305 mm).

Habitat: Salt marshes and adjacent freshwater swamps and marshes and adjacent uplands.

Seasonal Occurrence: Active year-round.

Florida Distribution: Atlantic salt marsh mink occurs in the coastal marshes of Nassau, Duval, and St. Johns counties. Gulf salt marsh mink occurs in coastal marshes from Franklin County along the Big Bend to Pasco County.

GULF SALT MARSH MINK *Mustela vison halilimnetes*
ATLANTIC SALT MARSH MINK *Mustela vison lutensis*

Range-wide Distribution: Atlantic salt marsh mink occurs from northeastern coastal Florida to southeastern South Carolina. Gulf salt marsh mink is restricted to Florida. Other subspecies occur throughout the eastern U. S. from Texas to Maine.

Conservation Status: No longer trapped for fur. The Gulf salt marsh mink, because of its extensive range along the Gulf coast, is protected in several conservation areas, including St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge and Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. Atlantic salt marsh mink is protected on Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve. No recent surveys have been conducted for these elusive subspecies.

Protection and Management: Prevent conversion of estuarine habitats. Maintain good water quality by reducing nutrient inputs from agriculture or septic systems.

Selected References: Brown 1997, Humphrey (ed.) 1992, Humphrey and Setzer 1989, Whitaker 1996.