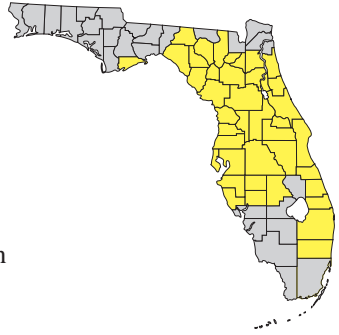


FLORIDA MOUSE

Podomys floridanus

Order: Rodentia
Family: Cricetidae
FNAI Ranks: G3/S3
U.S. Status: None
FL Status: Species of Special Concern



© James Layne



Podomys foot
© Dan Hipes



Peromyscus gossypinus
foot
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Description: A large mouse (7.3 - 8 in. = 179 - 203 mm), brownish to tawny above and whitish below. Flanks are often chestnut or orangish. Hind feet are large (0.86 - 1.1 in. = 23 - 28 mm), generally with five pads (plantar tubercles). Tail (3.12 - 3.8 in. = 80 - 95 mm) is indistinctly bicolored: gray-brown above, whitish below. Often has a faint skunk-like odor.

FLORIDA MOUSE

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Similar Species: Distinguished from all other mice within its range by the presence of five plantar tubercles on the hind feet versus six or seven in *Peromyscus* spp. Oldfield mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus*) is generally smaller (4.7 - 6.0 in. = 122 - 153 mm) with a proportionally shorter tail (1.6 - 2.4 in. = 40 - 60 mm) that is sharply bicolored. Cotton mouse (*Peromyscus gossypinus*) is slightly smaller, but overlaps in body measurements to the degree that the number of plantar tubercles is the best distinguishing characteristic.

Habitat: Xeric upland communities with sandy soils, including scrub, sandhill, and ruderal sites where they inhabit burrows of the gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*; see species account). In the absence of gopher tortoises, Florida mice will dig their own burrows or use those of oldfield mice.

Seasonal Occurrence: Active year-round except on especially cold nights.

Florida Distribution: Occurs from north-central Florida south to Highlands and Sarasota counties and along the Atlantic coast from St. Johns County south to Miami-Dade County.

Range-wide Distribution: Same as Florida distribution.

Conservation Status: Protected on several conservation lands throughout central Florida. Largest populations may occur within Ocala National Forest and the scrubs along Lake Wales Ridge.

Protection and Management: Preserve areas supporting sandhill and scrub. Use prescribed fire to maintain openings in scrub and encourage the growth of grasses and forbs important for food and cover. Protect populations of gopher tortoises.

Selected References: Brown 1997, Humphrey (ed.) 1992, Layne 1990, Lazell 1989, Whitaker 1996.