

American pygmy shrew

Sorex hoyi

FEATURES

The American adult pygmy shrew is three to three and one-half inches in length, including the tail. It has black-brown body fur, tiny, black eyes and a long, pointed nose. The belly fur is a lighter version of that on the back.

BEHAVIORS

The American pygmy shrew may be found in the northeastern one-fourth and possibly the southeastern one-fourth of Illinois. This mammal lives in woods and adjacent grassy areas. It requires fallen or rotting logs or forest floor litter to be a part of the habitat. The pygmy shrew eats insect larvae, spiders, beetles and ants. It is active year-round. This shrew releases a musky odor when it is disturbed. The American pygmy shrew is the smallest mammal in Illinois by weight. It is believed that this shrew produces more than one litter per year.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Mammalia

Order: Eulipotyphla

Family: Soricidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE







© P. Myers, Mammal Images Library of the American Society of Mammalogists

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge