

woodland vole *Microtus pinetorum*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Mammalia

Order: Rodentia

Family: Cricetidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The woodland vole has red-brown body fur with light red-brown fur on the belly. The head-body length is about three to four inches. The claws on the front feet are larger than the ones on the back feet. The tail is very short, and the eyes are tiny.

BEHAVIORS

The woodland vole may be found statewide in Illinois. This rodent lives on the forest floor in dry woods with oaks, hickories and maples. It also lives in roadside vegetation, orchards, pastures and weedy fields. The woodland vole eats berries, roots, nuts, seeds, wild onions and a variety of green vegetation. It is active day and night. This vole uses burrows under the soil that it digs or that were dug by other small mammals. It digs with the front feet, using the hind feet to push the loose soil behind it. The head is used to push loose dirt out of the burrow. The nest is built in a burrow or under an object on the ground that can be reached by a branch of the burrow. Several woodland voles may use the same nest. Two mating seasons occur in a year with young born from March through April and August through November. A litter contains two or three young. Young are helpless at birth but develop rapidly, living on their own at about three weeks of age. Sexual maturity is attained between two and three months of age.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge

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