

meadow jumping mouse *Zapus hudsonius*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Mammalia

Order: Rodentia

Family: Dipodidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The small (three to three and one-half inches long) meadow jumping mouse has brown fur on the back. The golden sides have an orange stripe. The belly fur is white. The meadow jumping mouse has a long (four and one-half to six inches) tail. The top of the tail is the same color as the back while the bottom of the tail is white. Its orange or yellow upper incisors are grooved. The back feet are enlarged for jumping.

BEHAVIORS

The meadow jumping mouse may be found statewide in Illinois. This rodent lives in moist areas in fields, woods and along streams, ponds and marshes. It eats seeds. When this mouse is disturbed, it will move in a series of jumps. It can swim. The meadow jumping mouse hibernates during the winter, usually entering hibernation in late September or October. It emerges again in late April or May. Mating probably occurs twice a year, once in spring and once in fall. The litter size varies between two and nine. Young are helpless at birth but develop rapidly. They are able to live on their own in about four weeks.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; marshes; peatlands; rivers and streams; swamps; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

© Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 2016. Biodiversity of Illinois.