

Ord's kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ordii*)



Taxonomy:

Family Heteromyidae. Thirty-four subspecies are recognized including, including the regional form, *Dipodomys ordii utahensis*.

Description:

Very similar to chisel-toothed kangaroo rat, but distinguished by its rounded and pointed lower incisors.

Total length: 208-365mm; Tail length: 127-129mm; Hind foot: 38-39mm; Ear: 12-13mm; Weight: 50-55g.

Distribution:

Southern Alberta and Saskatchewan south through much of the western US to Hidalgo, Mexico. Scattered records from the valleys of the Wasatch Front; very common further west toward the Great Salt Lake



Ecology and diet:

Ord's kangaroo rat lives in habitats associated with fine, sandy soils where they dig burrows for nesting and caching seeds collected in their fur-lined external cheek pouches. It is commonly associated with juniper, sagebrush, saltbush, and other desert scrub. Primarily a seed eater, it also eats green vegetation and occasionally insects.

This species is active year round and is strictly nocturnal, but it is often seen along roads at night.

Life History:

Reproduction occurs from early spring through late summer. Females have 1-2 litters of 3-5 offspring annually. Gestation lasts 28-32 days. Age at sexual maturity is about 3 months, and maximum lifespan is 7 years.

References: Garrison & Best 1990.