

Yellow-bellied marmot (*Marmota flaviventris*)



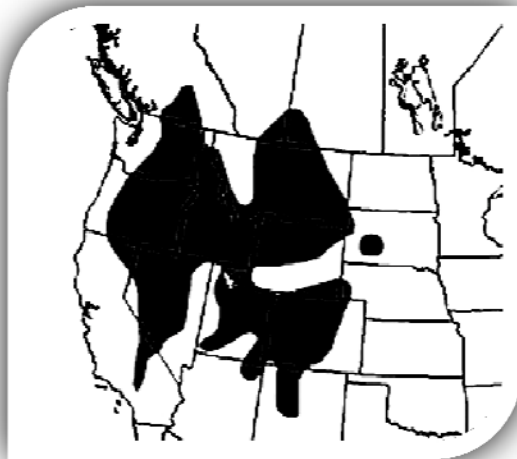
Taxonomy:

Family Sciuridae. Also known as rockchuck. Eleven subspecies are recognized including *Marmota flaviventris avara*, found locally.

Description:

Large, thick-set body. Color gray above, "frosted" with white, yellowish-red below and on sides of the neck.

Total length: 470-700 mm; Tail: 126-220 mm; Hind foot: 70-92 mm; Weight: 1.6-4.0 kg.



Distribution:

Throughout the western US and Canada, from southern British Columbia and Alberta southward through Nevada, Utah, and Colorado. Common along the Wasatch Front, particularly in rocky situations at high elevation.

Ecology and diet:

Marmots typically inhabit vegetated rocky slopes or rock outcrops in meadows. This species occurs throughout the Wasatch Range, and is most common above 6000 ft (1830 m) elevation. They are often seen

during the day on rock outcrops. They burrow beneath the rocks where they nest and hibernate during the winter. They are herbivorous and eat a variety of grasses, flowers and forbs gaining substantial fat stores in preparation for winter hibernation.

Life History:

Reproduction begins soon after the end of hibernation in March or April. Females have one litter of 3-6 offspring annually. Gestation is about 30 days. Young are sexually mature at 2 years. Maximum lifespan is more than 10 years.

References: Frase & Hoffmann 1980; Hoffmann 1999b.