

American Marten (*Martes americana*)



Taxonomy:

Family Mustelidae. Also called Pine marten. There are 8 recognized subspecies, including the regional subspecies *Martes Americana caurina*.

Description:

Has dense fur and a long, slender body. It has rounded ears, short limbs and a bushy tail. The fur ranges from tawny brown to black, to a pale yellow. The throat and chest bib range from orange to pale straw color.

Total length: 500-680 mm; Tail length: 180-230 mm; Weight: 470-1,250 g (males) 280-850 g (females)



Distribution:

Occurs across most of North America from Alaska through most of Canada and south through most of the major mountain ranges of the western United States. Common in forested habitat along the Wasatch Front.

Ecology and Diet:

Closely associated with boreal forest, the American marten can be found at all elevations in the mountains. They are active all year round and may be active at any time of the day or night. They are at home both on the ground and in the trees and can even swim. Martens have a very diverse diet with more than 100 different food

items being recorded, including small mammals such as voles, mice squirrels and hares but also birds, insects, fruits, and seeds.

Life History:

The mating season is in mid to late summer, courtship may last two weeks or more. Pregnancy lasts about 27 days and litters range from 1-5 but average about 3 offspring. The young are born at about mid-March to early April and are fully grown in about 90 days, but they do not reach sexual maturity until 15 months of age. Martens can live to be 15 years old.

Reference: Clark, 1999.