

## Northern Pocket Gopher (*Thomomys talpoides*)



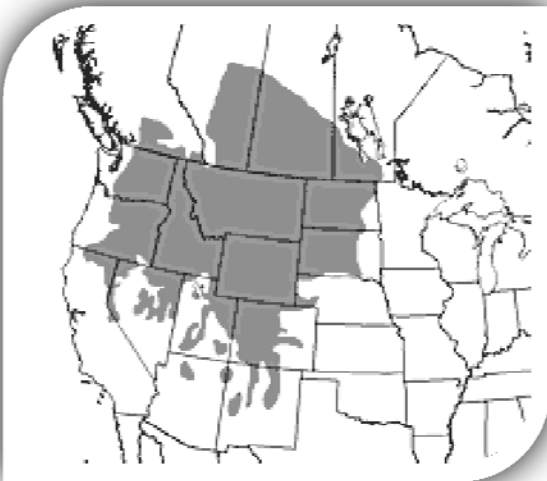
### **Taxonomy:**

Family Geomyidae. There are 55 recognized subspecies, including *Thomomys talpoides durranti*, the local subspecies.

### **Description:**

Coloration ranges from brown to grayish-brown to yellow-brown. Has short, soft but rather unglassy fur. Can be distinguished from other gophers by the presence of upper incisors with smooth anterior surfaces.

Total length: 165-260 mm; Tail length: 40-75 mm; Weight: 60-160 g.



### **Distribution:**

Occurs across much of the western United States and south-central Canada. Common at mid to high elevations along the Wasatch Front.

### **Ecology and Diet:**

Occupies a variety of different vegetation types ranging from sagebrush steppe, mountain meadows, and tundra to agricultural fields valley grassland and even people's yards. Areas with a closed canopy or sparse groundcover are avoided. They eat mostly herbs and forbs along with some grasses. They spend most of their time in underground tunnel networks and are seldom seen but are active year round and don't hibernate. They are solitary and tend to be very territorial.

### **Life History:**

Breeding occurs in the spring around March through April. Gestation lasts 18-20 days and the young are born in the underground tunnel network. Females have only one litter per year usually comprised of 4-7 offspring and the young are weaned after about 40 days; they are fully grown after 3-6 months.

**Reference:** MacMahon 1999.