

## SOME RECORDS OF THE MEADOW JUMPING MOUSE (*ZAPUS HUDSONIUS*) FROM SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

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The meadow jumping mouse (*Zapus hudsonius*) is rarely taken in southern Illinois. Two specimens have been recorded from Union County by Layne (1958:249). Gersbacher and Swayne (1951:122) report two taken in Perry County in April, 1948, and one taken in Jackson County in July, 1940. Despite active collecting by students and faculty from Southern Illinois University, no additional specimens of *Zapus* were taken in Jackson County until recently.

In 1962, extensive trapping in the summer resulted in the capture of eight specimens of *Zapus*; the first specimens of this genus to be taken in Jackson County since Gersbacher and Swayne reported their capture. Two additional captures represent a new county record for Franklin County and another specimen from Union County.

To attest to the rarity of capture of the species in this area, only five specimens were obtained during a trapping study which ran continuously from January to October, 1962. One hundred snap-traps were placed in a grid pattern in an old field three-fourths of a mile southwest of the Life Science Building on the Carbondale Campus. Ten lines of ten traps each were spaced at approximately 25-foot intervals. The five specimens were taken one

each after 16,800 trapnights (January 6 to June 25); 18,200 (July 10); 19,100 (July 19); 22,700 (August 24); and 26,200 (ending September 28) trapnights. No additional specimens were taken from September 29 to October 8, after which the line was discontinued. All the above specimens of *Zapus* were captured near a small ditch south and west or east of the dam of a pond less than 1/10th-acre in size on the trapping area. All were taken within 75 feet of the pond. The cover at the trapsites was sparse, with little litter on the ground, and was dominated by young sassafras (*Sassafras varifolium*) trees 10 to 20 feet tall.

Additional specimens of *Zapus* were obtained by 3 of 20 students enrolled in a course in mammalogy offered by Dr. E. Lendell Cockrum. The sixth record for Jackson County was taken on June 23 by Arthur Hicks the first night that 20 traps were set! These examples indicate the extremely sporadic nature of capture. The specimen taken by Mr. Hicks was trapped on the botany reserve along an old barbed-wire fence row under a willow tree (*Salix nigra*) approximately 20 feet tall. The ground was devoid of vegetation and litter, but abundant cover of trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*) surrounded the spot of capture. Mr. Hicks had traps in this

campus area for more than a month and failed to catch another specimen. Walter Biggs caught two specimens behind the high school building in Murphysboro, Jackson County, in late July.

The specimen from Franklin County, an adult male, was taken two miles north of West Frankfort on July 14 by Larry Contri. All these specimens are now part of the collection of the Zoology Department at Southern Illinois University.

From 1959 to 1963 a class from the Department of Zoology has placed 250 to 500 mousetraps overnight each year in the Pine Hills area north of Ware in Union County, Illinois. The number of traps set and the date each year were as follows: 250 on June 5, 1959; 300 on May 20, 1960; 400 on May 26, 1961; 250 on June 1, 1962; and 500 on May 24, 1963. In this total of 1450 trapnights over five years, only one *Zapus* was taken. This specimen, taken in 1963, was an adult female trapped in the wooded bottomland near the base of the bluff at Pine Hills.

Inasmuch as *Zapus* goes into hibernation during the winter, no records would be expected to be obtained at this time. Available records in southern Illinois span the period from April to October. Fitch (1958: 161) notes that jumping mice are particularly elusive to live-trapping. Most of his captures were in unbaited funnel traps set for reptiles. Thus, evasiveness may partially explain the few specimens on record in southern Illinois. The more probable reason for lack of records is that little trapping has been done during the summer months when the animals are most active.

#### LITERATURE CITED

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