



pygmy shrew

Sorex hoyi

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata
Class: Mammalia
Order: Insectivora
Family: Soricidae

FEATURES

The adult pygmy shrew is three to three and one-half inches in length, including the tail. It has a black-brown body, tiny, black eyes and a long, pointed nose. The belly color is a lighter version of that on the back.

BEHAVIORS

The pygmy shrew may be found in the northeastern one-fourth and the southeastern one-fourth of Illinois. This mammal lives in woods and adjacent grassy areas. It requires fallen or rotting logs or forest floor litter to be a part of the habitat. The pygmy shrew eats insect larvae, spiders, beetles and ants. It is active year round. This shrew releases a musky odor when it is disturbed. The pygmy shrew is the smallest mammal in Illinois by weight. It is believed that this shrew produces more than one litter per year.

HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: northeastern 1/4 + southeastern 1/4

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.