

## Isthmian woodrat

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**DISTRIBUTION:** *N. isthmica* occurs in Mexico and Guatemala. It is known from southeastern Guerrero, central and coastal Oaxaca (Edwards and Bradley, 2002; Goldman, 1904; Goodwin, 1969), the southern portions of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec (Edwards and Bradley, 2002) eastward to the Chiapas River valley in the state of Chiapas (Edwards and Bradley, 2002; Goldman, 1904, 1910). In these areas, *N. isthmica* is confined to the montane and arid coastal regions near the Pacific Ocean (Goldman, 1910). It is not known whether the distribution extends south into neighboring countries (Edwards and Bradley, 2002).

### SUBSPECIES IN MEXICO

*N. isthmica* is a monotypic species.

Originally described by Goldman in 1904, this species was later relegated to a subspecies of *N. ferruginea* (Goldman, 1910). Hall (1955) subsequently moved *N. ferruginea* containing *N. f. isthmica* into *N. mexicana*. Recently, Edwards and Bradley (2002) re-elevated *N. isthmica* to species status based on genetic data. A revision is needed to determine whether other subspecies currently included in *N. mexicana* should be assigned to this taxon.

**DESCRIPTION:** *Neotoma isthmica* is a large rat with orange-rufous to ferruginous color on its upper parts. The color fades to grayish fulvous on the forearms and hind legs. The face, top of the head, and back have scattered blackish hairs. Ventral areas, including the upper lip and lower sides of the face, are white. The forefeet are white, whereas the hind feet are dusky to the toes. The toes are white. The tail is long and thick but sparsely haired to scaly and indistinctly bicolored (brownish above, paler below). Ears are medium-sized. *N. isthmica* is similar in color to *N. picta* but coarser and generally larger in size. Their tails are both indistinctly bicolored, but *N. picta* has a thinner and more haired tail. The skull is larger, longer, and narrower than in *N. picta*. The zygomatic arch is more arched at its anterior. The frontal is flatter posteriorly. The braincase is less rounded (Goldman, 1904).

### EXTERNAL MEASURES AND WEIGHT

TL = 355 to 390 mm; TV = 166 to 198 mm; HF = 35 to 39 mm; EAR: 24 to 27 mm.  
Weight = N/A.

**DENTAL FORMULA:** I 1/1, C 0/0, PM 0/0, M 3/3 = 16.

**NATURAL HISTORY AND ECOLOGY:** In general, *N. isthmica* is a montane species associated with open woodland or shrub vegetation types (Cornely and Baker, 1986). In addition, it has been recorded in rocky outcroppings of montane and cloud forest areas (R.D. Bradley, pers. comm.) Little is known of the natural history and ecology of this species.

**VEGETATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND ELEVATION RANGE:** The type locality is Huilotepec, 13 km south of Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, Mexico. The elevation is approximately 30 m (Goldman, 1904). Vegetation is typical of the arid tropical and lower Sonoran zones.

**CONSERVATION STATUS:** There is no known conservation risk for this species.