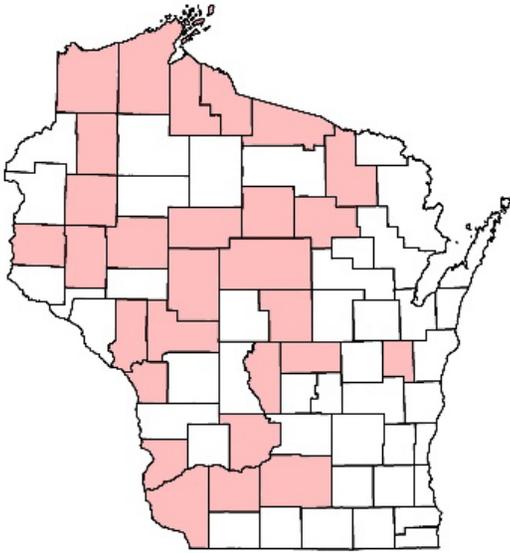


Historic Range and Distribution in Wisconsin

Historic White-tailed Jackrabbit Records in Wisconsin



*Data from WDNR Mammal Surveys 1987-2005 and WDNR - Ecological Inventory & Monitoring Section, 2011

Additional Species Information

- White-tailed Jackrabbits inhabit open grasslands and prairie. They are very rarely found in forests.
- Mainly herbivorous, the White-tailed Jackrabbit prefers feeding on grasses and broad-leaved plants.
- Jackrabbits can run at 35 mph covering 15 feet per bound.
- Their young are precocious, meaning they are born fully furred with open eyes and are fully weaned after only a month.

Additional Information

The White-tailed Jackrabbit may have expanded their range in Wisconsin due to deforestation and the opening up of land in the late 1800s alongside being introduced.



White-tailed Jackrabbit | Tom Koerner, USFWS

Questions and Comments

Questions, comments, and concerns can be directed to:

Richard.Staffen@wisconsin.gov

John.White@wisconsin.gov

For More Information:

[UW-Stevens Point Mammals of WI](#)

[Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#)

[NatureServe Explorer](#)

Special Thanks to Mace Drumright, UW-Madison for developing this pamphlet!

Have You Seen Me?



White-tailed Jackrabbit | Dean Biggins

WANTED: WHITE-TAILED JACKRABBIT SIGHTINGS

Native to much of the western United States, the White-tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus townsendii*) was introduced to much of Wisconsin in the early 1900s though some likely migrated here during the Cutover.

Since the 1980s, however, few sightings have been reported. Today it is unknown whether they still inhabit the state and if so what their population may be.

We need your help to gain a better understanding of this species and its current status in Wisconsin.

**Wisconsin Department
of Natural Resources**

101 South Webster St.
Madison, WI 53707



Similar Species

There are two more common species of rabbit and hare that the White-tailed Jackrabbit may be mistaken for.

Eastern Cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*)

- These rabbits are noticeably smaller at ~14-18 inches in length and ~2-4 lbs.
- The Eastern Cottontail, unlike both the Snowshoe Hare and White-tailed Jackrabbit, does not have a white winter coat.
- They have a reddish brown nape and back and a white or grey underbelly, compare this to the yellowish fur of the jackrabbit.
- Their young are altricial meaning they are born naked and blind and are much more reliant on their mother compared to the jackrabbit.

Snowshoe Hare (*Lepus americanus*)

- While larger than the Eastern Cottontail, Snowshoe Hares are still smaller than the White-tailed Jackrabbit at ~15-20 inches long and ~3-5 lbs on average.
- The Snowshoe Hares ears are also noticeably smaller than the Jackrabbits and as its name suggests it has large hairy feet that act as snowshoes in the winter.
- This hare, like the White-tailed Jackrabbit, does turn white in the winter, but is a much darker brown in the summer than the Jackrabbit to blend in to the shaded thickets it prefers.

How to Submit Sightings

Have you seen a White-tailed Jackrabbit? Report your observations:
wiatri.net/NHI/

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/white-tailed-jackrabbit-in-wisconsin>



****Photographic evidence is necessary to confirm the report****

Let us know if you have seen the White-tailed Jackrabbit on trail cams, as road kill, or in person.

Location and date sighted are appreciated to further our understanding of the current range of this species.

White-tailed Jackrabbit

Physical Description

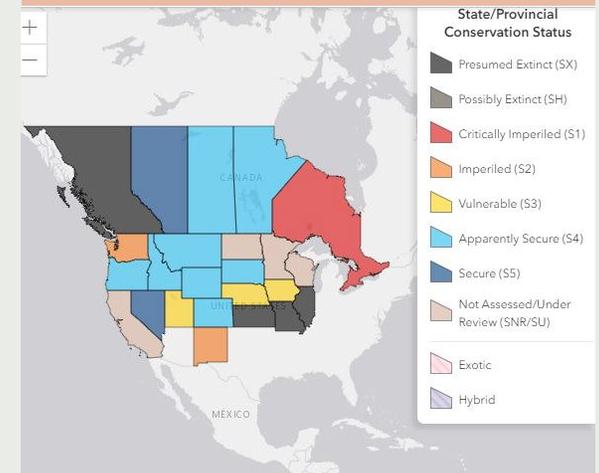
- The White-tailed Jackrabbit is one of the largest hares in North America at an average length of ~2 ft long and weighing ~6-10 lbs.
- Their backs are grey/brown to yellow with a grey or white underbelly.
- The White-tailed Jackrabbit tail is always white and their very long ears are black tipped no matter the season.
- In the winter they molt and have an all white coat other than the black patches on their ears.

Natural Heritage Conservation Program

Learn about more rare species in Wisconsin at dnr.wi.gov, keyword: NHC.



Distribution of the White-tailed Jackrabbit



(NatureServe 2020)

The White-tailed Jackrabbit can be found throughout much of the western United States and Canada.

It has been showing declines and even extirpations in the states at the edges of its range due to the loss of grassland habitats.