

MAMMALS OF ARCHES NATIONAL PARK

This list contains the names and records of ~~43~~ species of mammals recorded in Arches National Park and is compiled from observation records maintained by the Park. Most observations are from the past 20 years; the majority were made by Park personnel.

KEY

- C common, seen regularly
- U uncommon, occurs more or less regularly but not likely to be seen by the casual observer
- R rare, unusual but to be looked for
- O occasional, 1 or 2 records
- * status unknown at the present time

- n nocturnal (active at night)
- d diurnal (active during the day)
- c crepuscular (active primarily at dawn and dusk)

Page numbers refer to corresponding detailed descriptions in the companion to this checklist, Mammals of the Canyon Country by David M. Armstrong. For a detailed bibliography pertinent to this area, consult Armstrong's book.

BATS (Order Chiroptera)

Bats are the only flying mammal. They eat insects, lots of them. Look for bats at sunset as they gather insects in flight over diverse habitats throughout the Park.

Common Bats (Family Vespertilionidae)

Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) * n
pg42

This is the most widespread species of Myotis in North America, but is not usually abundant in the arid West.

Yuma Myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*) * n
pg44

Likely to be observed near streams or springs, flying low.

Long-eared Myotis (*Myotis evotis*) * n
pg45

Forages late in the evening, near water or woodland.

Fringed Myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*) * n
pg46

This bat is characterized by a fringe of pale hairs on the skin fold between the hind legs.

Long-legged Myotis (*Myotis volans*) * n
pg48

Can form large "maternity colonies" of several hundreds in rock crevices, hollow trees, or buildings.

Western Pipistrelle C n
pg52 (*Pipistrellus hesperus*)

Smallest bat in the U.S. and the most common bat here in Arches. It is the first bat species to emerge in the evening to forage.

Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) * n
pg54

Commonly roosts in many man-made structures; probably most observed bat in America.

Hoary Bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*) U n
pg56

Recognized by their swift straight-line flight over open country, Hoary Bats have "frosted fur" which makes them appear "snowed" upon.

Townsend's Big-eared Bat O n
pg60 (*Plecotus townsendii*)

A cave-dwelling species whose diet is mostly moths; their ears are approximately 37mm or 1 1/2" long.

Allen's Big-eared Bat * n
pg62 (*Idionycteris phyllotis*)

Forages late in the evening. The only other bat with large ears is the Townsend's.

Pallid Bat (*Antrozous pallidus*) U n
pg63

This bat forages on the ground. It's diet consists mainly of crickets, grasshoppers, scorpions, moths, and beetles

Free-tailed Bats (Family Molossidae)

Big Free-tailed Bat U n
pg68 (*Tadarida macrotis*)

Called "free-tailed" because the tail projects well beyond the edge of the skin fold between the hind legs.

RABBITS AND ALLIES (Order Lagomorpha)

Rabbits and Hares (Family Leporidae)

Desert Cottontail C c
pg73 (*Sylvilagus audubonii*)

A common mammal, it is an important prey species for many mammals, snakes, and birds of prey.

Black-tailed Jackrabbit ? (U or C) c
pg76 (*Lepus californicus*)

A large rabbit with long black-tipped ears and a black tail. Commonly seen in the Wolfe Cabin area.

RODENTS (Order Rodentia)

Rodents are among the most successful of mammals. The order includes almost 1700 species, some 40 percent of all living mammals.

Squirrels (Family Scuridae)

Colorado Chipmunk C d
pg88 (*Eutamias quadrivittatus*)

These seed-eaters collect from such plants as ricegrass, thistle, pinyon, and juniper depending on the season.

White-tailed Antelope Squirrel C d
pg92 (*Ammospermophilus leucurus*)

Look for these small squirrels running across the roads or through the grasslands with their white tails flipped up over their backs.

Rock Squirrel U d
pg98 (*Spermophilus variegatus*)
Salt and pepper coloration and a large and bushy tail identify this squirrel. Listen for its piercing whistles near rocky talus or in canyons.

White-tailed Prairie Dog R d
pg100 (*Cynomys leucurus*)
This mammal is rarely seen in Arches, although it was common at one time. Be on the look-out for low dirt mounds in open country.

Pocket Gophers (Family Geomyidae)

These animals are more thoroughly adapted to subterranean existence than any other North American rodents.

Botta's Pocket Gopher R n
pg105 (*Thomomys bottae*)
A tunnel-maker in the grasslands, this gopher is rarely observed.

Pocket Mice and Allies (Family Heteromyidae)

Apache Pocket Mouse C n
pg109 (*Perognathus apache*)
These mice seem to favor grassy areas that have been overgrazed.

Ord's Kangaroo Rat (*Dipodomys ordii*) C n
pg115
A small rodent with large "kangaroo" feet. This mammal is often seen hopping across the road at night.

Beavers (Family Castoridae)

Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) U n/c
pg119
Observed along the banks of the Colorado River. Old records indicate beaver in Courthouse Wash and Salt Wash.

New World Mice and Rats (Family Cricetidae)

Western Harvest Mouse U n
pg122 (*Reithrodontomys megalotis*)
This mouse occurs mainly in riparian corridors (washes, streams, etc.)

- Deer Mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatis*) C n
pg125
A white-footed mouse with a short tail that is dark on top and pale underneath.
- Canyon Mouse (*Peromyscus crinitus*) C n
pg127
An omnivorous mouse inhabiting open country such as blackbrush areas and slickrock areas devoid of vegetation.
- Brush Mouse (*Peromyscus boylii*) U n
pg129
The largest member of its genus in canyon country. These mice have long tails and are talented climbers of brush and rock.
- Pinyon Mouse (*Peromyscus truei*) C n
pg131
The Pinyon Mouse actually utilizes the juniper tree, not the pinyon, for food and shelter.
- Northern Grasshopper Mouse C n
pg133 (*Onychomys leucogaster*)
Mainly carnivorous, these mice will eat beetles, grasshoppers, spiders, caterpillars, other mice and even lizards.
- Desert Woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*) C n
pg144
Yellowish to buff-gray, this small woodrat dens in rock shelters. Look for large piles of sticks and other plant material that woodrats collect for their nests.
- Bushy-tailed Woodrat U n
pg149 (*Neotoma cinerea*)
A large woodrat with a large bushy tail, it also dens in rock shelters. Woodrats are also commonly called packrats because they are avid collectors of a variety of items.
- Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*) R n/d
pg151
Found mainly in aquatic environments. They feed on subaquatic vegetation such as roots, stems, leaves, and tubers.

Porcupine (Family Erethizontidae)

Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*) U n
pg154

Mainly nocturnal, porcupines spend the day in tree crotches. Look for their distinctive tracks in Courthouse Wash.

CARNIVORES (Order Carnivora)

It takes 100 pounds of plant to make 10 pounds of consumer to make one pound of carnivore. Because of this, carnivores are seldom abundant in ecosystems, and are therefore seldom seen.

Dog and Allies (Family Canidae)

Coyote (*Canis latrans*) U n/c
pg158

The song dog of the west, the coyote is the most conspicuous of canyon country carnivores. It has apparently extended its range, possibly due to the demise of the Gray Wolf.

Kit Fox (*Vulpes macrotis*) C n/c
pg164

Small animals with large ears and bushy tails tipped with black. Mostly nocturnal, look for them in the campground.

Gray Fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) ✓ U n/c
pg166

A medium-sized canine with a salt-and-pepper back, long dark tail, and rusty red color on the sides, legs and underside of the tail.

Bears (Family Ursidae)

Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*) O n/c
pg169

Records indicate their occasional presence, but only very rarely is one seen.

Raccoons and Allies (Family Procyonidae)

Raccoon (Procyon lotor) R n
pg171

"Lotor" means "washing" which refers to the raccoon's habit of washing its food before eating. Raccoons are notoriously omnivorous, eating virtually any available organic material.

Ringtail (Bassariscus astutus) U n
pg174

A dainty house-cat size carnivore with a large bushy black and gray banded tail which makes it look considerably larger than it is.

Weasels and Allies (Family Mustelidae)

Badger (Taxidea taxus) U n/c
pg181

A powerful, stocky, short-legged mammal, the badger digs out burrows of various rodents in search of prey.

Western Spotted Skunk R n
pg184 (Spilogale gracilis)

White-on-black with four to six white stripes on the back. Although mainly carnivorous, skunks will also eat fruit, berries, garbage and carrion.

Striped Skunk (Mephitis mephitis) R n
pg187

Two parallel white stripes contrasting with the black background identify this familiar skunk.

River Otter (Lutra canadensis) R d
pg189

These animals have been wiped out over most of their range due to trapping, damming of once wild rivers, and water pollution. However, a river otter was observed along the banks of the Colorado River in 1986.

Cats (Family Felidae)

Exquisitely adapted carnivores, cats are secretive and wary. An occasional track may be your only clue to the presence of these animals.

Mountain Lion (*Felis concolor*) R n
pg190

A strong and graceful predator whose diet consists mainly of deer (eating an average of one a week. Tracks are large and usually lack claw marks.

Bobcat (*Felis rufus*) R n
pg193

A short tail, a ruff of long hairs on the neck, a reddish-buff color and blackish rings and spots identify this cat.

EVEN-TOED HOOFED MAMMALS (Order Artiodactyla)

These opportunistic feeders take advantage of seasonal availability of grasses, forbs, and shrubs.

Deer and Allies (Family Cervidae)

Mule Deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) C c
pg199

Abundant in the Park year-round, seen in various meadows, especially in the Devil's Garden area.

Pronghorn (Family Antilocapridae)

Pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) O d
pg202

The last observation of pronghorn was in Salt Valley in 1941. Pronghorns are noted for their speed and the unique characteristic of shedding their horn sheaths annually.

Cows, Sheep, Goats, and Allies (Family Bovidae)

Bighorn Sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) R d
pg204

Reintroduction into Arches is re-establishing this classical desert mammal to its once native terrain. Bighorn prefer rocky, rugged terrain and are quite adept in climbing, jumping, and running among rocks.

List compiled by Damian Fagan, Laura Houck, and Beth Coker Roy

Approximately 1986, according to D. Fagan