

---

# THE RECENT MAMMALS OF IDAHO

BY

WILLIAM B. DAVIS

---

CONTRIBUTION FROM  
THE MUSEUM OF VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
BERKELEY



The CAXTON PRINTERS, Ltd.

Caldwell, Idaho

April 5, 1939

*Records of occurrence.*—Specimen examined, 1, from 5½ mi. NW Michaud, Power County (weathered skull). Additional records: *Lemhi County*: Lemhi Valley (Ross, 1855:60): near Junction; Agency Creek (Lewis and Phillips, 1923:136, 138). *Custer County*: Big Lost River Valley; Pahsimeroi Valley; Salmon River, near Challis; Thousand Springs Valley (Lewis and Phillips, 1923:143-149). *Blaine County*: E. fork Little Wood River (Lewis and Phillips, 1923:150). *Camas County*: near mouth of Camas Creek (Lewis and Phillips, 1923:153). *Cassia County*: 20 mi. W Raft River (Fremont, 1853:222). *Butte County*: Big Lost River Valley (Townsend, 1839:237); Little Lost River Valley (Ross, 1855:60). *Bannock County*: Justice Park (Whitlow and Hall, 1933:273); Ross Fork Creek (Townsend, 1839:212).

Genus *Ovis* Linnaeus  
Sheep

*Ovis canadensis canadensis* Shaw  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN SHEEP

*Ovis canadensis* Shaw, Naturalist's Miscell., 15:text to pl. 610. 1804. Type from mountains on Dew River, near Exshaw, Alberta, Canada.

*Synonyms.*—*Ovis canadensis*, Merriam, 1891:81; *Ovis montana*, Hornaday, 1901:101.

*Distribution.*—Formerly occurred throughout much of the mountainous portions of the state; now restricted in summer to the higher mountains in the central part of the state, in winter found in the higher valleys.

*Description.*—A large, wild sheep, the males carrying horns which curve regularly backward, downward, and outward in a spiral; horns with transverse ridges; ears small, pointed, hairy; head broadest between the eyes; body stout, nose narrow, chin beardless; grayish-brown in color with whitish rump patch.

*Remarks.*—Early accounts of mountain sheep in Idaho indicate that they were widely distributed and numerous. Seton (1929) records that in 1884 thousands of sheep were in the Lost River area; Hornaday (1901) reports that in 1887 trappers encountered 2,000 to 2,500 head on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River; and Merriam (1891) in 1890 found them to be common in the Lemhi and Pahsimeroi mountains and, in smaller numbers, in the Sawtooth Mountains. He also reported them as common in northern Idaho. A recent estimate (Eckert, 1935) places the total number in the state at near 2,000.

*I included  
Seton's records  
of Bighorn*

*Records of occurrence.*—Specimens examined, 3, as follows: *Owyhee County*: Silver City. (In May, 1935, I saw the mounted horns of a mountain sheep at Grand View that had been found in the mountains near Silver City. Mountain sheep no longer occur in southwestern Idaho.) *Blaine County*: Copper Creek, 6 mi. N Muldoon, 1 (horn only). *Bannock County*: Mink Creek, 11 mi. SE Pocatello, 1 (weathered horn). Additional records (supplied by A. H. Howell from specimens in the Biological Survey collection, unless otherwise stated): *Idaho County*: Bargamin Creek, 50 mi. SE Grangeville; Meadow Creek, 14 mi. above mouth; Wind River, 40 mi. S Grangeville. *Valley County*: Middle Fork Salmon River, 60 mi. from main Salmon River (Hornaday, 1901:104). *Custer County*: Upper Loon Creek (reported in *litt.* by F. Kenagy, of Rupert, Idaho). *Fremont County*: Henrys Lake (Hornaday, *ibid.*).

Genus *Oreamnos* Rafinesque  
Mountain Goats

*Oreamnos americanus missoulae* Allen  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOAT

*Oreamnos montanus missoulae* Allen, Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., 20:20. February 10, 1904. Type from Missoula, Missoula County, Montana.

*Synonym.*—*Mazama montana*, Merriam, 1891:81.

*Distribution.*—In Idaho, restricted to the more mountainous central and northern portions of the state.

*Description.*—A large, white goat with black hoofs and horns; horns in both sexes, ridged at base, gently curving backward and outward, those in male larger; neural spines of thoracic vertebrae long, producing a hump in the shoulder area; tail short and almost hidden in long, shaggy body hair; bearded; ears moderately large, clothed with short hairs; color in summer and winter nearly pure white, often tinged with yellowish in summer.

*Remarks.*—The mountain goat is a sturdy creature with short, stout legs; the squarish hoofs, consisting of soft inner pads each surrounded with a hard, sharp rim, are well adapted to climbing over the rocks and ice in its high mountain habitat. It is a fearless climber, but in many respects lacks the grace and daring of the mountain sheep.

Today, there are perhaps more mountain goats in Idaho than in any other state in the Union. The estimated population in 1922 (see Seton, 1929) was 4,148; a recent estimate (see Eckert, 1935) was 4,000. In Idaho they occur