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Of *New Mexico*



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Booklet data last updated on 9/11/2009

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Skunk, Hooded

Note: If you have any questions, concerns or updates for this species, please click [HERE](#) and let us know.

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Taxonomy

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Species IDa	050740
Name	Skunk, Hooded
Other Common Names	Zorrillo (Hispanic)
Category	05 Mammals
Elcode	AMAJF06020
BLM Code	MEMAMI
Phylum	Chordata
Subphylum	Vertebrata
Class	Mammalia
Subclass	Theria
Order	Carnivora
SubOrder	Fissipedia
Family	Mephitidae
Genus	Mephitis
Species	macroura
Subspecies	milleri (NM,AZ)
Authority	(Mearns)
Scientific Name	Mephitis macroura milleri (NM,AZ)
Account Type	This account represents a full species account with only one subspecies recognized in BISON-M.

NO IMAGE
AVAILABLE
AT THIS TIME

[Click here to search Google for images of this species.](#)

Predicted Habitat

Taxonomic [01](#), [02](#), [03](#), [05](#), [13](#), [16](#),
References [18](#)

NO PREDICTED
HABITAT IMAGE
AVAILABLE FOR
THIS SPECIES

Comments on Taxonomy

NEW MEXICO: Only one subspecies of Mephitis macroura is verified in New Mexico, M.m. milleri. *[03](#)* 1996: Name Change -- The Family name has been changed from Mustelidae to Mephitidae (Frey and Yates, 1996) *[16](#)*.

Legal Status (section updated on 10/21/2008)

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Status	References
USFS Sensitive: Region 3 (NM,AZ)	34
State NM: Provides limited protection	04
State NM: Sensitive taxa (informal)	27
State NM: Not a Game Species	04
Heritage Global: Demonstrably Secure (G5)	10
Heritage AZ: Apparently Secure in AZ (S4)	10
Heritage Ranking: Taxon Tracked by Heritage Program	15
Heritage Ranking: See comments	10 , 28

Concern	References
CONCERN: Limited distribution/Restricted range	26
CONCERN: Limited or dated data/information	26

Comments on Legal Status

1992: High priority was assigned to the hooded skunk with regard to the importance of assessing a threshold for its sustainable harvest as a furbearer (Thompson et al., 1992) *[08](#)*.

1995: The species, Mephitis macroura, was listed under the Natural Heritage Global Rank "G5" ("G5" = "Demonstrably Secure") (AGFD, 1995) *[10](#)*.

This listing was made on December 1, 1983 (NMNHP, 1997) *[28](#)*.

1996: The species, Mephitis macroura, was listed by a New Mexico Natural Heritage Program list as "Tracked": data were

being actively accumulated and entered into computerized and manual files by the Heritage Program (NMNHP, 1996) *15*.

NEW MEXICO 1997: The full species Mephitis macroura was listed under the Natural Heritage NM State Rank "S2" ("S2" = "Imperiled") on August 5, 1991 (NMNHP, 1997) *28*.

ARIZONA 1995: The species, Mephitis macroura, was listed under the Natural Heritage Arizona State Rank "S4" ("S4" = "Apparently Secure") (AGFD, 1995) *10*.

2007: U.S. Forest Service included the species Mephitis macroura its region 3 sensitive species list (USFS, 2007) *34*.

Comments on Population Trends and Threats

No Data Submitted

Comments on Cultural Importance

No Data Submitted

Species Distribution (section updated on 9/11/2009)

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State	References
NM: Extant	01 , 35
AZ: Extant	10
TX: Species occurs(ed)	12

New Mexico County Occurrence

County	Data	Season	Regular	Abundance	Behavior	References
Catron						01
Grant						01
Hidalgo	Specimen					01 , 06 , 07 , 14 , 17
Luna						08
New Mexico		Yr-Rnd	Regular		Breeds	11

Accident County Occurrence

No Data Submitted

Historical County Occurrence

No Data Submitted

Expected County Occurrence

No Data Submitted

Arizona County Occurrence

No Data Submitted

Hydrological Area

Area	Reference
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Upper Gila

08

Historical Hydrological Area

No Data Submitted

Other Distribution - New Mexico**Land Unit**

FOREST SERVICE LANDS, NEW MEXICO

USFS - GILA NATIONAL FOREST

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY LANDS

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY LANDS - GRAY RANCH, (Formerly TNC)

Other Distribution References - 07, 09**Other Distribution - Arizona****Land Unit**

US FOREST SERVICE LANDS, ARIZONA

APACHE-SITGREAVES NATIONAL FOREST

CORONADO NATIONAL FOREST

PRESCOTT NATIONAL FOREST

TONTO NATIONAL FOREST

Other Distribution Arizona References - 09**Mountain Range****Mountain Range****Reference**

3130-10845 Animas Mts.

07

Comments on Distribution

The hooded skunk is chiefly a low desert animal but has been taken as high as ponderosa forest. V. Bailey (1932) found a dead specimen near Mimbres *01*.

Records of occurrence: Specimens examined (total 10): CATRON: Lilly Park, south base Lilly Mtn., 8000 ft, 1 (USNM). GRANT: Burro Mts., 1 (USNM); Gila. 3 (USNM); Redrock, 4 (USNM). HIDALGO: 22 mi. S Animas, 1 (MSB); Animas Valley, Cloverdale Ranch, 1 (USNM) *01*.

Additional record. GRANT: 7 mi. above Mimbres (V Bailey 1932:336) *01*.

Museum records include (from the Western NMU collections - 1992) specimens from Luna County (Thompson, et al., 1992) *08*.

A Hooded Skunk museum specimen in the University of New Mexico collections -- acquired from the Museum of Southwestern Biology -- represents Hidalgo County (MSB #60674) (Thompson, et al., 1992) *14*.

The single record of the hooded skunk in Catron County is from ponderosa pine forest at "Lilly Park, south base Lilly Mtn., 8,000 ft." This species likely occurs in the Negrito watershed and should be sought particularly along the lower Negrito Creek (Frey, 1995) *17*.

1995: Hooded skunks are a fairly common species in Gila National Forest (USDA Forest Service, 1995) *29*.

ARIZONA Found in the southeastern quarter of the state, but extending northward as far as Camp Verde and northern Greenlee County *05*.

Findley et al. (1975) reported 7 records for the hooded skunk in New Mexico, all of which were located in the southwest

portion of the state. Their northern range in the Gila coincides with the Mogollon Rim (J. Hubbard, NMDGF, pers. comm.). Additional road kill/observation survey data (from 9/91 to 5/92; not from the museum collections) includes a record from Luna County (Thompson, et al., 1992)*08*.

Comments on Prehistoric Distribution

No Data Submitted

Habitat Association

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General Habitat

References

RIPARIAN	08
RIPARIAN	01?
RIPARIAN	07?
TERRESTRIAL	01?
TERRESTRIAL	07?
MONTANE	33
LOWLANDS	33

Comments on Habitat Associations

They are found in sycamore, cottonwood, and rabbitbrush riparian habitats *07*.

In montane habitat, hooded skunks are found primarily at intermediate elevations. (Frey, 1999) *33*

Gap Analysis Habitat Associations

Gap Vegetation Type	Season	Gap Importance	References
FOREST	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	999
PONDEROSA PINE	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
CHIHUAHUA/APACHE PINE	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
WOODLANDS	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	999
PINYON/JUNIPER closed	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
JUNIPER SAVANNA	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
BORDER PINYON/ALLIGATOR JUNIPER	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
REDBERRY JUNIPER open	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
SILVERLEAF/NETLEAF OAK closed	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
ENCINAL OAK open/gray/emory/white oak	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
SCRUB	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	999
Mt SCRUB mahogany/gambel/wavyleaf oak	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
CHAPARRAL toumey/scrub/live oak/manzan	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
GREAT BASIN rabbitbrush/winterfat/etc	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
CHIH DESERT creosotebush	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01

CHIH DESERT tarbush/mesquite/ocotillo	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
AZ UPLAND SONORAN DESERTSCRUB (AZ)	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
GRASS	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	999
SHORT GRASS STEPPE gramma+buffalograss	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
CHIH DESERT GRASSLAND black grama	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
CHIH DESERT GRASSLAND tabosa/sacaton	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
RIPARIAN	Yr-Rnd	Important	999
MONTANE RIPARIAN cottonwd/alder/willow	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01
LOWLAND RIPARIAN cottonwood/sycamore	Yr-Rnd	Important	32, 33, 01, 30, 31
ARROYO RIPARIAN Apache plume/mesquite	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 01, 05
BARREN	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	999
BARREN: MINES & QUARRIES	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33
BARREN: ROCK OUTCROP	Yr-Rnd	Casual Use	33, 05

Comments on Gap Analysis Habitat Associations

NEW MEXICO The single record of the hooded skunk in Catron County is from ponderosa pine forest at "Lilly Park, south base Lilly Mtn., 8,000 ft." although this species typically inhabits desert (Findley, 1975:313). Bailey (1931:336) noted that they are generally found along the stream valleys or in canyons, where they follow the trails and resort to rocky ledges or brushy bottoms for cover and concealment during the day" (Frey, 1995) *17*.

ARIZONA In Arizona, most records of this skunk are from desertscrub (Hoffmeister, 1986) (Frey, 1995) *17*.

Hooded skunks seem to prefer rocky slopes, bases of cliffs, or rocky sides of arroyos. They seem to prefer intermediate elevations, above the deserts but not in the highest mountains. (Hoffmeister, 1986) *5*

Land Use / Land Cover Associations

Land Use / Land Cover	References
Rangeland	01?, 07?
Herbaceous Rangeland	01?, 07?
Forest Land	08, 01?, 07?
Deciduous Forest Land	08
Evergreen Forest Land	08
Mixed Forest Land	08
Barren Land	01?, 07?

Comments on Land Use / Land Cover Associations

No Data Submitted

National Wetlands Inventory

No Data Submitted

Comments on National Wetlands Inventory

No Data Submitted

Habitat SAF**SAF****References**

Cottonwood-willow
 Interior Ponderosa Pine
 Western live oak

Habitat PNV**PNV****References**

Grama-Tobosa Shrubsteppe (Boutloua-Hilaria-Larrea)

[07?](#)

Habitat Eco Regions**Eco Region****References**

Great Plains-Short Grass Prairie: Grama-Buffer Grass

[07?](#)

Habitat Life Zones**Life Zone****References**

LOWER SONORAN: MESQUITE-CREOSOTE BUSH

[08](#)

Comments on General Habitat Associations

Hooded skunks are found in shortgrass plains, sactan grassland, sycamore riparian, cottonwood riparian, rabbitbrush riparian, oak savanna [*07*](#).

The hooded skunk is chiefly a low desert animal but has been taken as high as ponderosa forest. V. Bailey (1932) found a dead specimen near Mimbres [*01*](#).

ARIZONA Hooded skunks seem to prefer rocky slopes, bases of cliffs, or rocky sides of arroyos. They seem to prefer intermediate elevations, above the deserts but not in the highest mountains. We encountered this species in the heavy growth of weeds and shrubs near the Santa Cruz and San Pedro rivers in places where one would expect cotton rats. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service data from Fort Lowell indicate hooded skunks prefer the streams below the foothills [*05*](#).

Primary habitat types include: Coniferous and Mixed Woodlands, Chihuahuan Desert Scrub, Closed Basin Scrub, Plains-Mesa Grassland, Desert Grassland and Riparian [*08*](#).

The major habitat of the hooded skunk consists of coniferous forest, deciduous forest and riparian (Spowart and Samson 1986). Desert lowlands or Chihuahuan mesquite-grassland were named primary habitat by both Findley et al. (1975) and Schmidly (1977), yet they include higher elevation habitats [*08*](#).

PRIMARY HABITAT -- GIS CALCULATIONS: The hooded skunk uses approximately 5607 out of 41470 square kilometers of Coniferous and Mixed Woodlands (C&MW) habitat within New Mexico [*08*](#).

The hooded skunk uses approximately 105 out of 69868 square kilometers of Plains-Mesa Grassland (PMG) habitat within New Mexico [*08*](#).

The hooded skunk uses approximately 9089 out of 55233 square kilometers of Desert Grassland (DG) habitat within New Mexico [*08*](#).

The hooded skunk uses approximately 3632 out of 18845 square kilometers of Chihuahuan Desert Scrub (CDS) habitat within New Mexico *08*.

The hooded skunk uses approximately 1079 out of 7539 square kilometers of Closed Basin Scrub (CBS) habitat within New Mexico *08*.

The hooded skunk uses a total of approximately 19512 out of the 311478 square kilometers within New Mexican borders *08*.

Food Habits

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Trophic

References

INVERTIVORE-eats invertebrates

[999](#)

Trophic Comments

No Data Submitted

LifeStage	Food Item Consumed	Part of Food Item
General	ANIMALS:	Not Specified
General	INVERTEBRATES	Not Specified
General	ARTHROPODA	Not Specified
General	Insecta	Not Specified
General	Orthoptera	Not Specified
General	SEE COMMENTS	

Comments on Food Habits - General

Hooded skunks are primarily insectivorous. Dalquest (1953) "found a fat animal hunting in a grassy meadow by preying upon grasshoppers make inactive by frost" *05*.

Comments on Food Habits - Important

No Data Submitted

Comments on Food Habits - Adult

No Data Submitted

Comments on Food Habits - Juvenile

No Data Submitted

Comments on Food Habits - Larval

No Data Submitted

Environmental Associations

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LifeStage

Environmental Associations

General	Elevation: 4001-5000 ft. (1220 - 1520 m)
General	Elevation: 5001-6000 ft. (1520 - 1830 m)
General	Elevation: 8001-9000 ft. (2440 - 2740 m)
General	Elevation: Specified in Comments
General	Human Association: Farm outbuildings (barns, silos, sheds)
General	Human Association: Abandoned buildings
General	Human Association: Tolerates/benefits from human assoc.
General	General Waterbody Type: Streams
General	General Waterbody Type: Specified in Comments
General	Terrestrial Features: Cliffs/ledges
General	Terrestrial Features: Rock outcrops & Rimrock
General	Terrestrial Features: Specified in Comments
General	Desert: Specified in Comments
General	Grassland: Savannas - Mixed grass and trees
General	Veg. Successional Stage: Specified in Comments
General	Tree Distribution in Stand: Savannah (very open)
General	Movement Corridors: Specified in Comments
LifeStage	References
General	01 , 05 , 07 , 08
Comments on General Environmental Associations	
<p>The hooded skunk is chiefly a low desert animal but has been taken as high as ponderosa forest *01*.</p> <p>ARIZONA Hooded skunks seem to prefer rocky slopes, bases of cliffs, or rocky sides of arroyos. They seem to prefer intermediate elevations, above the deserts but not in the highest mountains. We encountered this species in the heavy growth of weeds and shrubs near the Santa Cruz and San Pedro rivers in places where one would expect cotton rats. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service data from Fort Lowell indicate hooded skunks prefer the streams below the foothills *05*.</p> <p>Many hooded skunk sightings have occurred along streams in riparian vegetation or near water (Godin 1982). Hooded skunks have been recorded at 2440 m (8000 ft.) in New Mexico (Hubbard 1972) *08*.</p>	
Comments on Limiting Environmental Associations	
No Data Submitted	
Comments on Adult Environmental Associations	
No Data Submitted	
Comments on Breeding Adult Environmental Associations	
No Data Submitted	
Comments on Feeding Adult Environmental Associations	

No Data Submitted

Comments on Resting Adult Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Comments on Juvenile Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Comments on Resting Juvenile Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Comments on Feeding Juvenile Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Comments on Larvae Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Comments on Resting Larvae Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Comments on Feeding Larvae Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Comments on Pupa Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Comments on Egg Environmental Associations

No Data Submitted

Life History

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Description

Mephitis macroura resembles M. mephitis but has a longer tail and rarely has a dorsal white stripe that is divided into a "V." However, the back may be entirely white, or it may be black with two lateral white stripes *01*.

ARIZONA A small bodied, long-tailed species of Mephitis in which in Arizona speci- mens white lateral stripes extend from below the ears along the sides to the thighs; underside of the tail is usually white, or the dorsum has a broad white band beginning between the ears and extending onto the dorsum of the tail, but the white band is interspersed with black hairs; in rare cases, the animal is entirely black, with a remnant of the white stripe above the nose and a few white hairs interspersed in the tail; hind feet short (averaging 64-66 mm); tympanic bullae slightly inflated; skull small *05*.

Reproduction

Schmidly (1977:153), writing about this species in western Texas, says breeding may take place from mid-February to the end of March *05*.

Behavior

Hooded skunks often offer little resistance when caught in a trap. Some people hve said that hooded skunks take refuge under buildings less often than other skunks do *05*.

Species Origin

No Data Submitted

Limiting Factors

No Data Submitted

Population Attributes

No Data Submitted

Life History Codes

Origin: Native to NM

Breeding/Spawning Season: February

Breeding/Spawning Season: March

Reproduction: Viviparous/Ovoviviparous (live bearing)

Life History Code References - 05, 26

Comments on Life History Codes

No Data Submitted

Comments on Species Association

No Data Submitted

Wildlife Disease and Parasites

No Data Submitted

Comments on Disease

No Data Submitted

Management Practices

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Comments on Special or Standard Techniques

AGING -- Animals have been placed in age categories by the degree of closing of three sutures: nasal, presphenoid-basisphenoid, and occipital- basisphenoid. The nasal suture was scored as 1, no fusion; 2, fusing; 3, fused but suture evident; 4, suture obliterated. Presphenoid-basisphenoid: 1, open; 2, fusing; 3, fused. Occipital-basisphenoid: 1, open; 2, fusing; 3, fused. This follows the system devised by Kirkland (1975) *05*.

Effects

Adverse

Adverse

Management Action

ADC: Sodium Cyanide M-44

ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL (ADC) Chemical

Comment	ADC: Zinc Phosphide, below ground (grain bait)
Comment	ADC: Snares, neck & leg
Comment	ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL (ADC) Chemical
Comment	ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL (ADC) Non-Chemical
Comment	ADC: Zinc Phosphide, above ground (grain bait)
Comment	ADC: Zinc Phosphide (meat bait)
Effects	References
Adverse	20
No Effect	23 , 24 , 25
Comments on Management Practices	
No Data Submitted	
Comments on Animal Damage Control Methods	
<p>NOTE: The BISON-M coding of potential impacts of ADC practices (e.g., M-44's, traps, snares and poisons) in the "RESULTS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES" (MGT.FIELD & MGT fields) section, assumes the practice occurs in occupied habitat and is applied without mitigation. For more information, contact Jon Klingel, Conservation Services Division, NM Dept of Game and Fish. Santa Fe, NM. The literature often does not indicate species of skunks taken with M-44s. Many striped skunks and some of the less common spotted skunks are killed. It seems likely that some of the skunks taken by M-44s may be hooded and hog-nosed skunks, as well. It seems reasonable to consider both these species as potentially killed by M-44s. The programmatic EIS (1994) states that 272 skunks were killed by M-44s in FY 1988. These included 23 striped skunks and 2 spotted skunks in New Mexico (USDA, 1994) *21*.</p> <p>CHR 23 states, in a one year test (1940-41) in CO, WY, and NM, the following animals were killed by coyote getters: 1107 coyotes, 2 bobcats, 24 dogs, 14 black-billed magpies, 7 foxes, 8 unidentified skunks, 2 badgers, 2 unidentified eagles, 2 bears, 1 hawk, 1 pika, and 1 cow (Eisler, 1991) *20*.</p> <p>Direct mortality risk from zinc phosphide is low. However, damage may occur to kidney, lungs and liver. This is based on a physiological study done using Siberian ferrets. Secondary poisoning by zinc phosphide are known to affect different animals in the following manner: Red and Gray Foxes become ill, Great Horned Owl showed significant behavioral irregularities, Red Fox, rats, chickens, domestic cats and dogs have died (Johnson and Fagerstone, 1994) *23*.</p> <p>Scavengers may be at some risk from animals killed by below ground bait of zinc phosphide grains because some of the target animals die above ground. One study estimated that 1290 Black-tailed prairie dogs, poisoned by zinc phosphide grains, died above ground (Johnson and Fagerstone, 1994) *23*.</p> <p>ADC reports occasional taking of Spotted Skunks by neck snares. Nationwide about 100 Striped Skunks are taken in neck snares every year (ADC 1993, 1994, 1995) *24*.</p> <p>ADC also reports occasional taking of Striped Skunks in New Mexico (ADC-New Mexico 1994, 1995) *25*.</p> <p>The normal target species for zinc phosphide - meat baits use, are commensal rodents (having contact with humans). Zinc phosphide is highly to extremely toxic to both mammals and birds. All scavengers are at risk of primary poisoning and possibly secondary poisoning from zinc phosphide in meat baits. For many of these species the LD 50 level has not been determined (Johnson and Fagerstone, 1994) *23*.</p> <p>It shall be the policy of The Wildlife Society to support programs for predator control that are directed toward specific</p>	

individuals causing damage rather than broad spectrum removal aimed at lowering local or overall predator populations (TWS, 1997) *19*.

Comments on Recommended Management Practices

No Data Submitted

Comments on Historical Management Practices

No Data Submitted

Comments on Population Status

No Data Submitted

References

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