

MAMMALS OF THE FINGER LAKES

A Guide for
FL WATCH
Camera Trappers



All photos are from the Finger Lakes Region of NY



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- ▣ John Van Niel, Co-PI CCURI and FLCC Professor
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General tips for identification are here on YouTube



IDENTIFYING CAMERA TRAPPED ANIMALS

Addressing the specific challenges of
camera trap data



Mammals covered

- ▣ Virginia Opossum
- ▣ Eastern Cottontail
- ▣ Beaver
- ▣ Muskrat
- ▣ Woodchuck
- ▣ Eastern Gray Squirrel
- ▣ Red Squirrel
- ▣ Eastern Chipmunk
- ▣ Southern Flying Squirrel
- ▣ Peromyscus sp.
- ▣ North American Porcupine
- ▣ Brown Rat
- ▣ Eastern Coyote
- ▣ Domestic Dog
- ▣ Red Fox
- ▣ Grey Fox
- ▣ Bobcat
- ▣ Feral Cat
- ▣ American Black Bear
- ▣ Northern Raccoon
- ▣ Striped Skunk
- ▣ North American River Otter
- ▣ Fisher
- ▣ American Mink
- ▣ Weasel sp.
- ▣ White-tailed Deer

What's in a name?



- ▣ eMammal uses the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for common and scientific names (with the exception of Domestic Dog)
- ▣ Often the “official” common name of a species is longer than we are used to such as “American Black Bear” or “Northern Raccoon”
- ▣ Please note that it is Grey Fox with an “e” but Eastern Gray Squirrel with an “a”.

Virginia Opossum *Didelphis virginiana*



Typically nocturnal. Found in most habitats. About Domestic Cat size. Can climb.



Face white, body whitish to dark gray.



Ears and tail tip can show frostbite damage.



Eastern Cottontail *Sylvilagus floridanus*



Images are often blurred due to speed. White tail can overexpose in flash.



Snowshoe Hare (not shown) is possible in higher elevations.



Very common. Found in variety of habitats.



American Beaver

Castor canadensis



Common in aquatic habitats. Note hind feet – large and webbed. Flat tail.

When swimming, can be confused with other semi-aquatic mammals.



Large, block-faced rodent.



Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus*



Common in wet habitats. Usually doesn't stray from water.



Dark, naked tail. Body brown to blackish (darker when wet). Football-sized rodent.

Pointier face than Beaver.



Woodchuck

Marmota monax



Also known as Groundhog. Largest member of squirrel family in NY.

Common. Flat head, bushy tail. Gray to brown to dark brown. Tail often darker than body.



Eastern Gray Squirrel

Sciurus carolinensis



Common. Tail is full. Active during the day but flash sometimes creates black and white photos under dark canopies.



Common.
Brown to gray
to **black**.



American Red Squirrel

Tamiasciurus hudsonicus

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Expect some black and white photos in shaded forests.

AM M 2/3

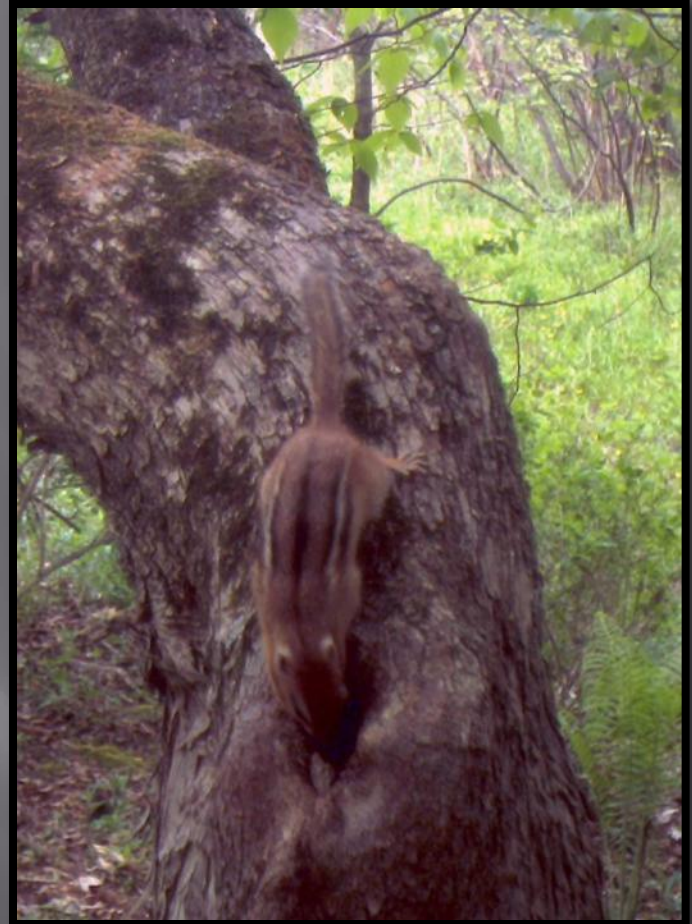


Common, especially in conifer stands. Not always red. Can show black line along side. Noticeably smaller than Eastern Gray Squirrels.

Eastern Chipmunk *Tamias striatus*



Common, but small size means it may be overlooked in a photo. Stripes are a give away.



The only species of chipmunk in the Finger Lakes



Southern Flying Squirrel

Glaucomys volans



Common in forest, hedgerow or backyard trees.

Nocturnal. Large eyes produce large eye shine

Tail is flattened. Dark stripe on side may be visible as in Red Squirrel.



Ⓜ FLCC B-06

32°F 0°C



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Peromyscus species

Two species of *Peromyscus* mice in the Finger Lakes: *Peromyscus maniculatis* (North American Deermouse) and *Peromyscus leucopus* (White-footed Mouse). Identify to Genus only.



Common.
Nocturnal. Long
naked tail.

Learn to tell
apart from
larger Flying
Squirrel.



North American Porcupine

Erethizon dorsatum

More common in the southern part of our area.



MOULTRIE



CAMERA 1

19 JUL

Often looks fat and blocky. Quills may show as light streaks on body.

Brown rat

Rattus norvegicus



Also known as Norway Rat.
About the size of a Red
Squirrel but with a naked
tail.

Coyote

Canis latrans



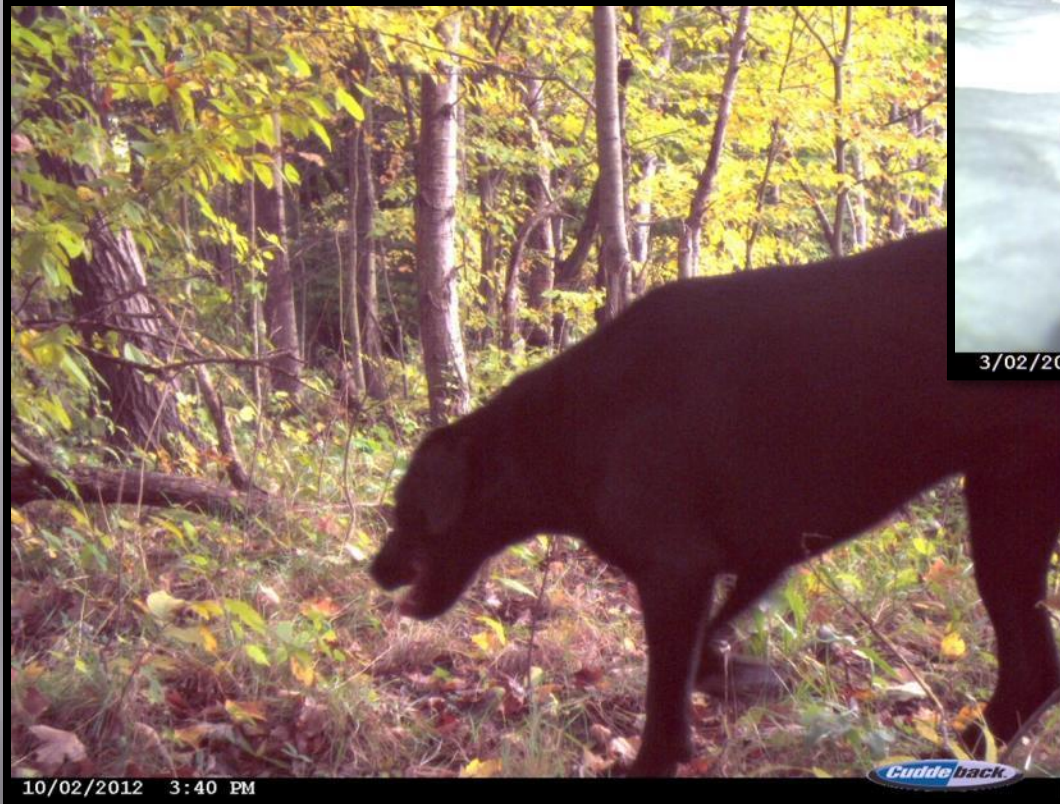
Color can vary from gray to brown to even black.

Tail is full with a black tip, unless animal is in molt or has mange.

Common, but seem to be camera shy. Mostly nocturnal



Domestic Dog *Canis familiaris*



May or may not be collared. Often curious about camera. Many sizes, colors and breeds possible.



"Unknown Canid" is a possible identification if you have a coyote-like dog (or a dog-like coyote!).

Red Fox

Vulpes vulpes



Commonly has black legs, black behind the ears and a white-tipped tail.



Common in almost all Finger Lakes habitats. Red to brownish with full tail unless in molt or mangy.



Grey Fox

Urocyon cinereoargenteus

Note spelling of “Grey”



Appears gray due to “salt and pepper” fur. Tail has black stripe along top and to the tip. Reddish fur on legs, sides and on parts of face and neck.



Less common than Red Fox.



Two fox species captured in almost the exact spot, one day apart.

Grey Fox: Ears close together and rounded, snout short. May show dark on muzzle.

Red Fox: Ears tall, pointed and farther apart. Snout long. Slightly larger in size.



Bobcat *Lynx rufus*

There are no documented Canada Lynx in the Finger Lakes.

Uncommon but increasing. If short tail isn't visible, look for facial ruff



Short tail that has a black and white tip.



AM



FLCC B-030

33°F 3°C



Domestic Cat

Felis catus

Too common. Active day or night. Variety of colors and breeds possible. May be found far from homes.



Not as well muscled as Bobcat.



American Black Bear

Ursus americanus



May have a white “blaze” on chest.

Two or more bears is almost always a female and her offspring.



Northern Raccoon

Procyon lotor



Hard to misidentify. Young often stay with mother for many months. Curious about cameras.



Striped Skunk *Mephitis mephitis*

Only species of skunk in the Finger Lakes.
When irritated, they hold their tails high.

Amount of white varies!



North American River Otter *Lontra canadensis*



Tail shows a strong taper and is not “fluffy”. Often found in groups. Becoming more common in the Finger Lakes.



Much larger than mink. Bulbous nose. Often wet and sleek looking.



Fisher

Martes pennanti



Face looks foxy, body and tail look catlike, but actually in the weasel family.

Tail is thick and full except during summer molt when it is thin and might be confused with otter.



American Mink

Neovison vison



Tail is often darker than body.

About the size of a Gray Squirrel.
Ears small but visible.



Common in wet habitats.
Black to brown in color,
darker when wet.



Two photos taken at the same location. Both animals are the same distance from the camera, making this an accurate comparison.



Mustela species:
-Long-tailed Weasel
-Ermine (or Short-tailed Weasel)



Turn white in winter. In summer, shows a white belly while Mink do not. Tail tip is black.



Very small. Thin enough to follow a mouse into a hole.



White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*



Unmistakable in
our area.



Spots may be hard to see on
nighttime photos.

