

## SOUTHERN LIMITS OF THE LEAST WEASEL (*MUSTELA RIXOSA*) IN CENTRAL UNITED STATES

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In November, 1954, a least weasel, *Mustela rixosa allegheniensis*, was captured at Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois. This is more than 100 miles south of the previously known most southern record of this species in Illinois and caused me to review the distribution of *Mustela rixosa* in parts of the central United States.

According to Hall's review of the American weasels (1951:187-190), the southern limits of *Mustela rixosa allegheniensis* include northern Illinois, northern Indiana, and northern, central, and southeastern Ohio. Recently collected material and pre-

viously published records indicate, however, that the least weasel occurs farther south in both Illinois and Indiana and farther southwest in Ohio. On the accompanying map (Fig. 1) the marginal records listed by Hall (1951) for Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio are given as unnumbered dots. The additional records, indicating a more southerly range for *M. r. allegheniensis*, are shown as numbered dots. These records are:

ILLINOIS: 1. Lee County: Henkel. One specimen in the collections of the Illinois Natural History Survey. It was recorded by Necker and Hatfield (1941) as Henkle. 2. Champaign County: Urbana. A subadult male was recovered

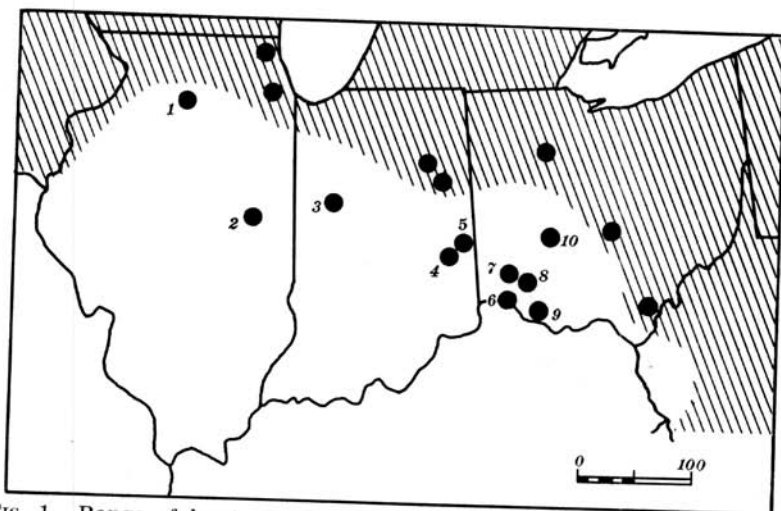


FIG. 1.—Range of least weasel in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, with southern limits as recorded by Hall (1951) indicated by unnumbered dots. More southerly records are indicated by numbered dots.

dead on November 27, 1954, from a basement window-well of a home. It apparently died of starvation. Specimen is in the Museum of Natural History, University of Illinois.

INDIANA: 3. Tippecanoe County: West Lafayette. Kirkpatrick and Conaway (1948) not only examined a male least weasel from West Lafayette, but reported seeing another near Battle Ground, Tippecanoe County. 4 and 5. Wayne County: Milton (one specimen) and Richmond (two specimens). James B. Cope of Earlham College has kindly given me these records of specimens in his museum. The two specimens from Richmond were taken within the city. A third animal entered the museum of Earlham College, was captured, but escaped before it could be prepared.

OHIO: 6. Hamilton County: California and 6 mi. NNW New Richmond. Goodpaster (1941) recorded the capture of these two specimens. 7. Warren County: Maineville. Goodpaster informed me (*in litt.*, December 16, 1954) that least weasels were rather plentiful there, although he had collected only one. 8. Warren County: Pleasant Plain. Goodpaster (*in litt.*) collected two specimens there. 9. Brown County: 5 mi. SW Mt. Orab. At Neal's Corner, southwest of Mt. Orab, Goodpaster saw a least weasel that was smashed on the road and not savable. 10. Fayette County: 8 mi. NE Washington C. H. This individual, almost white, was brought in by a cat and prepared by Goodpaster (*in litt.*).

#### LITERATURE CITED

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