



Above: A Heath Mouse captured at a recent survey.

Confirming the Presence of Heath Mouse Populations in the South East of SA

The Heath Mouse (*Pseudomys shortridgei*) is a nationally threatened species of native rodent recorded from within extremely limited areas of heathland and heathy woodland habitats of southern Australia: Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

In South Australia, the species is known from a single museum specimen collected on Kangaroo Island in 1967 (that was initially incorrectly identified as a Swamp Rat (*Rattus lutreolus*) until correctly identified in 2000) and from three reserves in the South East, where the species was first discovered in 2001, followed by two additional new sites in 2004.

Recent surveys undertaken by Nature Glenelg Trust in conjunction with DEWNR, aimed to confirm the presence and status of Heath Mice in former capture locations in the lower South East. The three reserves that were surveyed resulted in 12 different Heath Mice being captured a total of 31 times in two reserves, as well as some other interesting results. For instance, the survey led to the first record of the Swamp Antechinus (*Antechinus minimus*) in Dry Creek Native Forest Reserve (8 captures), and the discovery of the Dusky Antechinus (*Antechinus swainsonii*) in Lower Glenelg River Conservation Park (2 captures) – the first time this species has been found in South Australia.

The results of the survey build upon the previous work undertaken (in the early 2000s) and will help determine the objectives for the next phase of work to improve our understanding of the conservation requirements of the Heath Mouse in the South East region. As one of South Australia's rarest mammals, these little critters can certainly use our help!

Remember too, if you come across something dead in the bush that looks interesting or unusual, it could be important. Bag it up (securely, to contain any smell) and pop it in the freezer before contacting the SA Museum to arrange transport. For help with identification, you are also welcome to email photos to us here at NGT (info@natureglenelg.org.au) and we'll do what we can to help!

Below: A Swamp antechinus caught in a recent survey.

