## **Heath mouse**

## Pseudomys shortridgei

Description

**Head-body** Tail 90-120mm 80-110mm

Weight 55-90g

The fur of this grey-brown rodent is flecked with dark guard hairs that make the heath mouse look fluffy. It is paler underneath, has a blunt face, bulging eyes and short rounded ears.

Heath mice look similar to bush rats, but are distinguished by their tails. The tails of heath mice are dark above and light underneath while rats have ringed tails.



Heath mice eat leaf and stem material supplemented with fungus and insects. Diet can vary from season to season.

They construct multiple shallow burrows, usually under a low bush. Although generally nocturnal, heath mice are sometimes active during the

Breeding

Diet and habitat

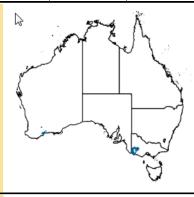


Maturity 10-12mnths No. young

Lifespan max 6 yrs

The heath mouse breeds during late spring and summer, with females giving birth between December and January. Females begin breeding at 10 to 12 months of age and can produce two litters of three young per year. Young develop quickly and growth is rapid, juveniles reaching adult size in 3-4 months.





Heath mice occur in south-west Victoria, southern SA and southern WA. They were thought to be extinct in WA until rediscovered in 1987, although they have not been found during recent surveys. They are proposed for reintroduction to Dirk Hartog Island as part of the Return to 1616 project.

Vulnerable EN VU Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2015

Numbers of heath mice are declining and are threatened by feral predators, habitat loss and fragmentation.

## **Fact sheet**

## **SHARK BAY World Heritage**









