

American Water Shrew, *Sorex palustris brooksi*



Description

- Large water shrew with an average length of 152 mm of which 75 mm is tail; average weight of 10.6 grams.
- The water shrew has a bi-coloured body, with glossy black fur on its dorsal surface and silvery white fur on its ventral surface.

Similar Species

- Pacific Water Shrew, although ranges do not overlap.
- Terrestrial shrews.

Biology

- The water shrew is semi-aquatic, hunting for prey under water and on land.
- Food is consumed on land.
- The shrew feeds every 10 minutes and consumes its own weight in food every 24 hours.
- Lifespan of 18 months.

Habitat

- As the shrews spend up to half of their time hunting underwater, they stay very close to water.
- Habitat includes riparian areas, creeks, streams and possibly bogs and marshes.
- Found at all elevations.



Occurrence: DSI, DCR

- Assumed to be found throughout Vancouver Island; there are only 67 records from 38 locations. Locations are as far north as Port Hardy, along the east coast at the Quinsam River (near Campbell River), as far inland as Robertson Creek (near Port Alberni), along the west coast at Lost Shoe Creek (near Ucluelet) and as far south as Veitch Creek (near Victoria).
- South Island and Campbell River Forest Districts

Status

BC: Red-listed (Threatened or Endangered) and Identified Wildlife Species in B.C.

Canada: Not listed

Action Required

- Notify BCTS, contact a qualified professional to verify species and assist in retention design.
- Maintain a 5m buffer along streams in the vicinity of where the shrew was found.