

The genus *Peromyscus* is incredibly diverse with 57 species that range from boreal communities in Canada to tropics of Panama throughout multiple biomes (Zimmerman et al. 1978). Two *Peromyscus* species that are of interest in Santa Cruz County, and on UCSC's Natural Reserve sites are *P. truei* and *P. boylii*. Both *Peromyscus* species are difficult to differentiate and have been misidentified in previous studies. With molecular identification of the cytochrome-b gene, it is now confirmed that *P. truei* exist on the Forest Ecology Research Plot. As of now, no *P. boylii* have been identified.

Within California, the two species co-occur but are separated by habitat. *P. truei* are associated with hard or soft chaparral. In a coastal redwood belt, like Santa Cruz, these mice are common with redwoods, Douglas fir, California laurel, madrone, and poison oak (Hoffmeister 1981). *P. boylii* range can overlap with *P. truei*, but they are more commonly found in the pinyon juniper zone and oak woodlands. Without the presence of both species, *P. truei* ears are equal to or less than hind foot length and *P. boylii* ears are equal to hind foot length. Where *P. truei* and *P. boylii* are sympatric, *P. truei* has longer ears relative to hind foot length and *P. boylii* ears are 70-80% as long as the hind foot (Hoffmeister 1981). *P. truei* has a lateral, orange stripe down entire side, whereas *P. boylii* may have an orange lateral stripe limited to the shoulder region. Fur textures also differ, *P. truei* has long, fluffy fur and *P. boylii* has short, less lax fur. Body size are similar, *P. truei* ranging from 171-231mm and *P. boylii* 175-210mm (Kays et al. 2002). Both are omnivores with diets that reflect their temporal and spatial habitats.

*Peromyscus truei*



*Peromyscus boylii*



Hoffmeister, D., D. Williams, S. Anderson, T. Lawlor. 1981. Mammalian Species #161: <<Peromyscus truei>>. Pp. 1-5 in *Mammalian Species*, Vol. 151-200. The American Society of Mammalogists.

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