

NOTES

WESTERN HARVEST MOUSE, *REITHRODONTOMYS MEGALOTIS* (RODENTIA: MURIDAE), ON MAGDALENA ISLAND, MEXICO

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ABSTRACT—We collected two specimens of *Reithrodontomys megalotis* on Magdalena Island on the Pacific Ocean side of Baja California Sur. They represent the first insular record of the species in Mexico. These records extend the distribution range of the species about 450 km south of the southernmost record of *R. megalotis* in Baja California. In addition, three previously unpublished localities in mainland Baja California are reported.

RESUMEN—Se colectaron dos especímenes de *Reithrodontomys megalotis* en isla Magdalena, en el océano Pacífico de Baja California Sur. Representan el primer registro insular de la especie en México. Estos registros extienden el rango de distribución de la especie ca. 450 km al sur de la localidad más sureña de *R. megalotis* en Baja California. En adición se reportan tres registros anteriormente no publicados en la península de Baja California Sur.

The western harvest mouse, *Reithrodontomys megalotis*, is one of the most widely distributed rodents in North America, occurring from southern Canada to central Mexico. According to Álvarez-Castañeda and Cortés-Calva (1999) and Sánchez and Oliva (2005), in Mexico, this species is absent from Baja California Sur, the Pacific and Gulf Coast, and the Yucatán Peninsula. However, the species was collected at three previously unpublished localities on Baja California Sur and deposited in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (MVZ), University of California, Berkeley: a) 1 m SE Cabo Tórtolo, Bahía Tortugas, Baja California Sur, on 7 November 1951 (27°38'0.8"N, 114°21'2.4"W; female, MVZ 115298); b) Aguaje del Sauce, Baja California Sur, on 29 April 1925 (26°49'11.0"N, 112°12'37.2"W; male, MVZ 35726); and c) San Jorge, Baja California Sur, on 27 April 1931 (25°44'1.1"N, 112°04'26.2"W; male, MVZ 50006; Fig. 1). These localities represent the first records for the species in Baja California Sur.

In Baja California, the southernmost reported locality for *R. megalotis* is Nuevo Rosarito, which is on the Valle de los Cirios Biosphere Reserve (Álvarez-Castañeda and Ríos, 2003). *R. megalotis*

inhabits desert, grassy and weedy habitats, meadows, fencerows, fallow fields, agricultural and riparian edges, salt marshes, and pine-oak (*Pinus-Quercus*) forests (Webster and Jones, 1982).

We visited Magdalena Island in January 2006 as part of a survey to document the status of native vertebrate fauna in the Baja California Pacific islands. Magdalena Island is located southwest of the Baja California peninsula (Fig. 1). It is one of the largest islands on the Pacific side of the peninsula, extending about 80 km in length, with an area of 28,771 ha. Magdalena Island is inhabited by 14 species of reptiles (Grismer, 2002; Peralta et al., 2007), 8 species of mammals, and several species of birds. We set 135 Sherman traps and 8 funnel traps for 5 nights along an area of mangrove and sand dune vegetation about 2.5 km N Puerto Magdalena (24°39'26.2"N, 112°08'31.1"W, elevation 1 m). We collected two specimens of *R. megalotis* in funnel traps on 28 January 2006. The specimens were deposited in the Collection of Vertebrates (Mammals), Facultad de Ciencias of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC) at Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico:

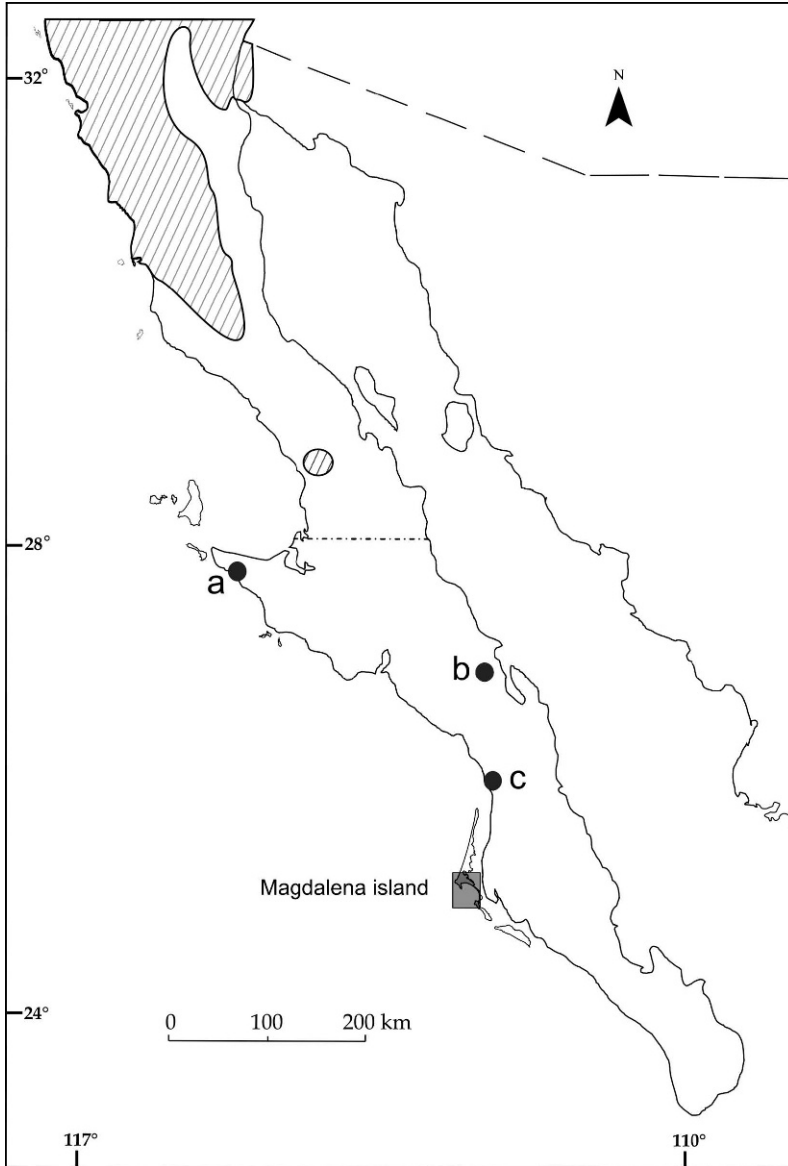


FIG. 1.—Distribution of *Reithrodontomys megalotis* in Baja California, Mexico (modified from Álvarez-Castañeda and Ríos, 2003). Square represents the new insular record. Solid dots indicate specimens from Baja California Sur deposited in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (MVZ), University of California, Berkeley: a) MVZ 115298, b) MVZ 35726, and c) MVZ 50006.

CVUABC 754 (male) and 755 (female). Respective external measurements (in mm) for each specimen are: total length, 126.5, 127; length of tail, 65, 65; length of hind foot, 16.5, 17; length of ear, 13, 14; weight, 6.6, 6.0 g. Respective cranial measurements (in mm) are: length of skull, 18.4, 18.5; breadth of braincase,

8.5, 8.8; zygomatic breadth, 9.86, no data; condylobasal length, 17.2, 16.9; interorbital breadth, 2.94, 3.31; nasal breadth, 1.76, 1.88; nasal length, 6.5, 6.7; palatal length, 3.6, 3.58; length of maxillary toothrow, 2.95, 3.04. These specimens represent the first insular record of *R. megalotis* in Mexico and extend the distributional

range of the species about 450 km south of the nearest published locality in Nuevo Rosarito, Baja California, and about 119 km south of the southernmost record (MVZ 50006). Other species of rodents caught by us on Magdalena Island were the prairie deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*), and little desert pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus arenarius*).

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