

RANGE EXTENSION FOR THE SHORT-TAILED SHREW

GARRY R. JONES

Department of Biology, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, S7N 0W0

The short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda manitobensis*) is at the northwest limit of its range in Saskatchewan and has been reported from 20 separate locations in the province to date. A review of these capture records and a recent distribution map for Saskatchewan was published by L. S. Riome.²

While investigating small mammal populations in cutover areas of the "Mixedwood" section of the boreal forest region of Saskatchewan³ in 1974 and 1975, 36 specimens of *Blarina* were collected by the author. An additional 10 specimens were taken in 1975 by Mr. Eric Hadley of the Saskatchewan Forestry Association,

TABLE I.
Summary of capture records for the short-tailed shrew
in 1974 and 1975 in Saskatchewan.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Month of Capture</i>	<i>No. of Specimens</i>	<i>Sex of Specimens</i>	<i>Age Category</i>
9.6 km. SW of Candle Lake T54 R23 W2	Aug. 1974	5	2♂, 3♀	1J, 4A
	June, 1975	4	2♂, 2♀	2J, 2A
	July, 1975	13	5♂, 7♀, 1U	7J, 1SA, 5A
	Aug., 1975	9	4♂, 5♀	2J, 4SA, 3A
3.2 km. NW of above location T54 R23 W2	July, 1975	3	2♂, 1♀	1J, 2A
7.5 km. S of White Gull Lake T56 R21 W2	Aug., 1975	1	1♀	1A
9.6 km. N of Christopher Lake turn-off (East of Hwy. No. 2) T54 R26 W2	Aug., 1975	1	1♂	1A
≈5 km. W of Bittern Lake T57 R27 W2	Aug., 1975	7	4♂, 2♀, 1U	5J, 1A, 1U
	Sept., 1975	2	2♂	1J, 1A
	Oct., 1975	1	1♂	1J
	U-unclassified J -juvenile			SA A

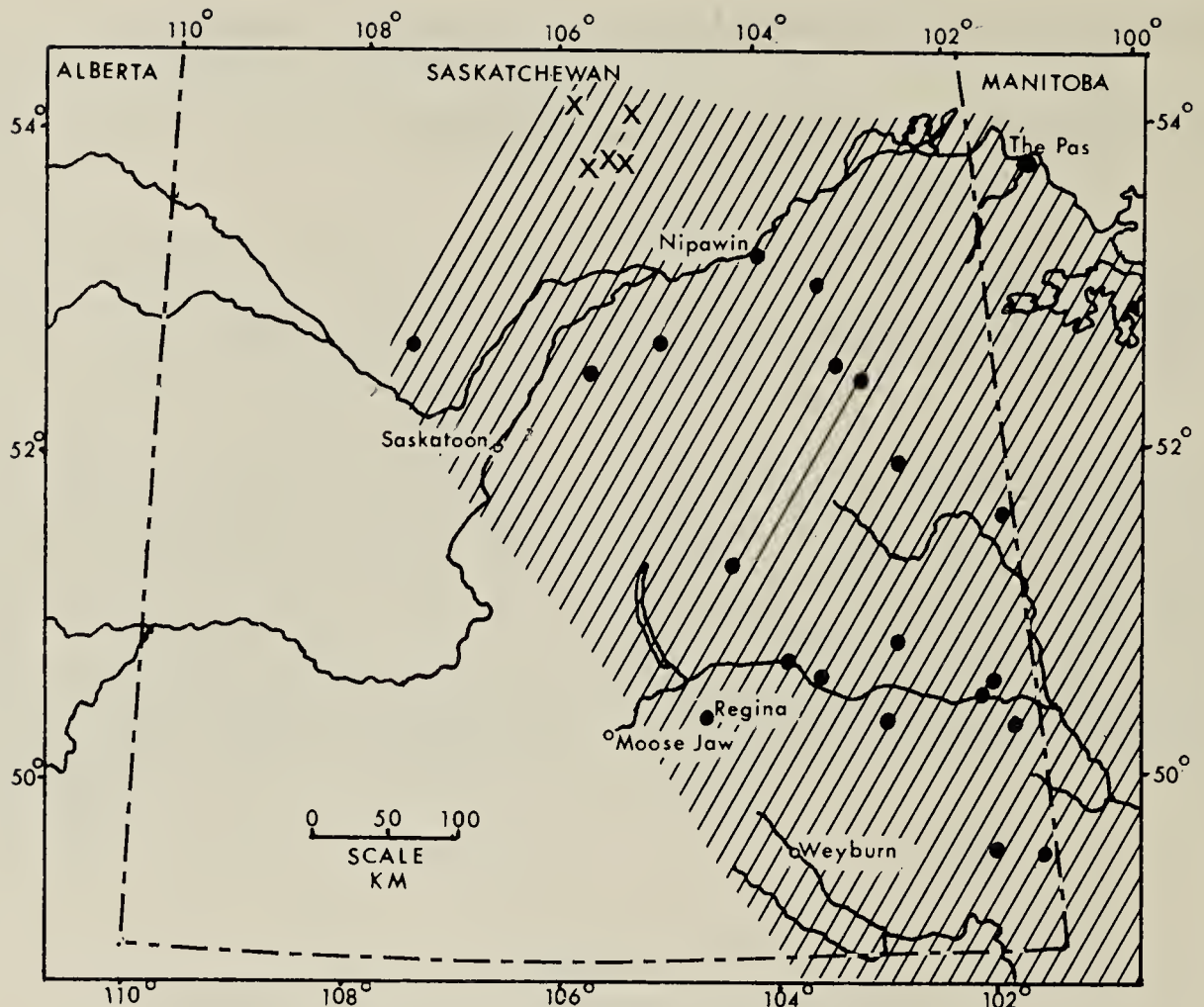


Figure 1. The distribution of *Blarina brevicauda manitobensis* in Saskatchewan. New records are marked X.

who was conducting similar studies in a cutover area west of Bittern Lake (T57 R27 W2). Mr. Hadley was kind enough to contribute his records to this report. The shrews were taken with Museum Special break-back traps baited with peanut butter. A summary of the new capture records is presented in Table I. Average measurements for adult specimens taken by the author were as follows: total weight 22 gm (19-26), total length 130 mm (125-134), tail 25 mm (22-28), hind foot 15 mm (14-16); for juvenile specimens: total weight 16 gm (14-17), total length 121 mm (114-126), tail 25 mm (23-28), hind foot 14 mm (13-15). Average measurements for the adult specimens contributed by Mr. Hadley were as follows: total length 126 mm (112-129), tail 23 mm, hind foot 15 mm (14-17); for juvenile specimens: total length 118 mm (106-129), tail 25 mm (22-28), hind foot 15 mm (14-17). Total weights were not available.

The new records represent a northern range extension for the short-

tailed shrew in Saskatchewan. The distribution map (Fig. 1) is modified from Riome (1968) to include the new records.

The short-tailed shrew is a fossorial insectivore which prefers high humidity and decaying leaf litter as optimum environment.¹ It is, therefore, possible that *Blarina* may be found even farther north in Saskatchewan, in association with moist, deciduous habitats.

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Mr. W. H. Beck in confirming the validity of these new records as representing a range extension for *Blarina* in Saskatchewan.

¹BANFIELD, A. W. F. 1974. *The Mammals of Canada*. University of Toronto Press 1974, 438 p.

²RIOME, L. S. 1968. *Short-tailed Shrew at Nipawin*. Blue Jay 26: 201-203.

³ROWE, J. S. 1972. *Forest Regions of Canada*. Department of the Environment, Canadian Forestry Service Publ. No. 1300, 172 p.

