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The Food Habits of Small Mammals
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Project Number 84

Snap-traps were set in a variety of habitats in Teton National Forest for a total of 815 trap-nights during the first three weeks of August 1955. These habitats included a whitebark pine forest, a spruce-fir forest, a subalpine meadow, and a lodgepole pine forest. During the trapping period 149 animals were caught, mainly Peromyscus maniculatus artemisiae, providing 131 stomachs the contents of which could be satisfactorily examined. In each case the examination was restricted to a rapid qualitative survey of the items present. A careful quantitative re-examination of each stomach will be made this winter. A collection of seeds and fruits was taken from each area where necessary to help in the recognition of unfamiliar items.

The initial results seem to verify previous observations. Peromyscus maniculatus, in this part of North America at least, is an opportunist utilizing within certain limits any foods that are abundantly available. Little was learned about the food habits of the other mice caught because of the small number of specimens taken.

Since the trapping technique used to secure most of the specimens used in the food habit study was one that we have used many times in the past to secure relative population figures, some information was obtained concerning the population levels of mice in the different habitats studied. In comparison to similar situations studied in Colorado Peromyscus populations appeared to be fairly high while Microtus populations were very low.

The study constituted a small part of a larger study we are making concerning the causative factors underlying small mammal distribution in the Rocky Mountain area.