

COTTONTAIL RABBIT

Common Name: cottontail

Other Names: rabbit, bunny

Scientific Name: *Sylvilagus floridanus*

Appearance: length - about 15 inches
weight - between 2 and 3 1/2 pounds
color - buffy gray with white underbelly
other - rather large ears (to 4 inches) and cotton ball tail

Range: - statewide

Habitat: - wooded edges, brushy fields, shrubby yards

Diet: - young woody stems, many herbaceous plants, many grasses

Reproduction: - 3-4 young per litter
- 4-6 litters per year

Behavior: - most active after dark
- most common in suburban yards where dense shrubbery or brushpiles are available
- no social structure in populations

Problems: - can be very damaging to some woody ornamentals
- damaging in vegetable gardens, especially to legumes (beans, peas) and cabbage family
- may chew bark of young trees

Solutions: - fence around beds or plants at least two feet high
- use landscape plants less susceptible to damage
- use of live traps is often ineffective when rabbit populations are high
- use of repellents, scare devices and ultrasonics are generally ineffective
- lethal control can be effective where legal

Legal Aspects: - may be destroyed when damaging property

Printed Material in Appendix: yes