

**THERE'S A MOUSE IN THE HOUSE!: THE ECOLOGY OF THE DEER MOUSE
IN PERIDOMESTIC SETTINGS ^{TWS}**

Don White, Jr. and Richard J. Douglass
Dept. of Biology, Montana Tech of the
University of Montana - Butte 59701

Deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) are the principle reservoir of the Sin Nombre virus (SNV) that is the etiological agent of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS). Several studies of SNV in sylvan populations of deer mice are ongoing. However, most human cases of HPS are contracted in buildings (i.e., houses, trailers, barns, granaries, etc.). Unfortunately, virtually nothing is known about the ecology of deer mice in buildings. In October, 1996 we initiated a study to investigate the ecology of deer mice in peridomestic settings in western Montana. These data will be used to further our understanding of the SNV infection cycle in humans. The results of the first 6 months of our research will be discussed.