

PREVALENCE OF HANTAVIRUS IN MONTANA—AN UPDATE^{TWS}

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The Polson, Wisdom, Gold Creek, Cascade, Cutbank, and CMR areas of Montana were surveyed for rodent density and presence of antibodies to hantavirus from June 1994 to October 1999. Surveys were made from May through October of each year except 1994, which was surveyed from June through October. We captured 7222 individual rodents, consisting of 18 species, within forest, grassland, sagebrush, and meadow habitats. Five of the 18 rodent species were confirmed to be positive for antibodies to hantavirus. Meadow voles (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*), boreal red-backed voles (*Clethrionomys gapperi*), sagebrush voles (*Lemmiscus curtatus*), and yellow-pine chipmunks (*Tamias amoenus*) made up a combined 5.4 percent of the infected rodents. We focused demographic analysis on deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) which totaled 94.6 percent of the positive rodents. Infected deer mice were predominately males ($\chi^2 = 7.06$, 1df, $P = .0079$) and primarily adult males ($\chi^2 = 90.6$, 2 df, $P < 0.001$). Deer mice with scars had a greater infection rate than mice without scars ($\chi^2 = 67.4$, 1 df, $P < 0.0001$). Polson was shown to have the highest percent of infected deer mice of the 5 areas. Among habitats, sagebrush had the highest infection rates among deer mice. Higher infection rates among deer mice were found in May followed by July, June, August, September, and October.