ARVICOLA NASUTA.—AUD. and BACH.

SHARP-NOSED ARVICOLA.

PLATE CXLIV. FIG. 2.—MALE.

A. A. Pennsylvanica longior, caudâ, capite, brevior; pedibus, tenuibus; calce brevissima; corpore supra, ferrugineo-fusco; subtus ex cinereo et flavo variegato.

CHARACTERS.

Larger than Arvicola Pennsylvanica; tail shorter than the head; legs small and slender; heel very short; body above, dark rusty brown, soiled yellowish-gray beneath.

DESCRIPTION.

The head of this species is rather longer and the nose sharper than in the Arvicolæ in general; the lower incisors are long and very much curved; the body is less cylindrical than that of Wilson's Meadow-Mouse; ears, circular, sparingly hairy within, and well covered with fur exteriorly; whiskers, shorter than the head; tail, thinly covered with hair.

The legs are rather slender, and are covered with short hairs; the fore-feet have naked palms; claws, small; tarsus, more than one third shorter than that of the much smaller *Arvicola Pennsylvanica*; the fur on the back is also shorter.

COLOUR.

Incisors, yellowish-white; fur on the back, from the roots to near the tips, grayish-black; the tips are yellowish-brown and black, giving it a rusty brown appearance; the legs and tail are light brown; the chin, soiled white; the fur on the under surface of the body is dark cinereous from the roots to near the tips, where it is light coloured.

DIMENSIONS.

		Inches.	Lines.
Length of head and body, - - - - -	-	5	9
Head, - - - - -	-	1	10

	Inches.	Lines.
Tail, - - - - -	1	6
Heel to point of nail, - - - - -		6

For the sake of convenient comparison we give the dimensions of the largest of six specimens of *Arvicola Pennsylvanica* :

	Inches.	Lines.
Length of head and body, - - - - -	4	2
Head, - - - - -	1	4
Tail, - - - - -	1	6
Heel to point of longest nail, - - - - -		11

HABITS.

We have found this species breeding in the vicinity of Wilson's Meadow-Mouse, although never nearer than a few hundred yards from the latter, and we have sometimes observed their nests in summer on large hillocks of sedge-grass (*carex*) growing in marshy localities, and surrounded by water; they do not occupy these exposed situations, however, in winter, but are found on more elevated knolls, under the roots of old trees or shrubs. They produce four or five young at a birth, and certainly breed twice, if not oftener, during the season.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.

The specimen which we have described was obtained by Dr. BREWER, near Boston. We received another from J. W. AUDUBON, who procured it at the falls of Niagara; we have also frequently found it in the northern parts of New York, where the *Arvicola Pennsylvanica* likewise exists; and we recently observed specimens near Detroit in Michigan. It appears, however, not to be found as far to the south as Wilson's Meadow-Mouse, as we have not succeeded in tracing it to the southern counties of Pennsylvania, where we have sought to obtain it.

GENERAL REMARKS.

We are not certain that this species may not have been indicated, although not accurately, by RAFFINESQUE in the American Monthly Magazine, under the name of *Lemmus noveboracensis*. His descriptions, however, in every department of natural history, are so short, vague, and imperfect, that it is impossible to identify his species with any degree of certainty; they have created such confusion in the nomenclature that

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

On Stone by W^m E Hitchcock

Fig. 3.

Fig. 1. *Townsend's Arvicola.* Fig. 2. *Sharp-nosed Arvicola.* Fig. 3. *Bank Rat*

Drawn from Nature by J. W. Audubon

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nearly all European and American naturalists have ceased to quote him as authority.

Sir JOHN RICHARDSON has described an *Arvicola* from the Rocky Mountains, which he refers to the above species (*A. noveboracensis*) of RAFFINESQUE, but which differs widely from the species here described.

Audubon, John James and Bachman, John. 1854. "Arvicola nasuta, Sharp-nosed Arvicola [Pl. CXLIV, male]." *The quadrupeds of North America* 3, 211–213. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.322365>.

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