

**RIPARIAN BRUSH RABBIT
(SYVILAGUS BACHMANI RIPARIUS)**

Federal/California status: Endangered/Endangered



Description

The riparian brush rabbit is a small cottontail similar in appearance to the more abundant desert cottontail (*S. audubonii*). Characteristics that distinguish the riparian

brush rabbit from the desert cottontail include size and coloration. The riparian brush rabbit is smaller (10.6-13.2 inches, 300-375 mm) and darker grayish-brown. The tail of the brush rabbit is small and inconspicuous compared to the desert cottontail, and its ears are uniformly colored. The tail of the desert cottontail shows much white when viewed from behind, and the inner (medial) tips of the ears are black.

Habitat

Riparian brush rabbits occupy streamside (riparian) communities in the northern San Joaquin Valley dominated by thickets of willows (*Salix* spp.) and large clumps of shrubs and vines such as wild rose (*Rosa* spp.), blackberries (*Rubus* spp.), coyote brush (*Baccharis* spp.), and California wild grape (*Vitis californica*). Mostly on a seasonal basis, they also use dense, tall stands of herbaceous plants adjacent to patches of riparian shrubs.

Range/distribution

The only known populations of riparian brush rabbits are confined to Caswell Memorial State Park (MSP) on the Stanislaus River near Ripon, and Paradise Cut and Tom Paine Slough overflow channels of the San Joaquin River at the southern edge of the San Joaquin River Delta.

Photo: CSUS/ESRP