

# House Mouse

*Mus musculus*

**Order:** Rodentia

**Family:** Muridae

**Description:** Slightly less than 17 cm long including their tail (tail is about 8 cm long). Color of fur ranges from brown to gray to white. Pointed snout with long whiskers, round ears and thin tails.

## Special Features:

- **Life Span** – Mice in captivity live as long as 6 years.
- **Activity** – The house mouse is a nocturnal animal, mainly active at night.
- **Mating** – Most mice build nests in protected nooks, but some build burrows in the ground.
- **Behavior** – Teeth continue to grow throughout their lifetime; therefore, they must gnaw on hard things to keep wearing their teeth down.

**Range and Habitat:** Native to the Indian subcontinent, the house mouse has accompanied humans and colonized, tropical, temperate, semi-desert, desert, and sub Antarctic regions throughout the world. Lives and breeds in and around buildings.

**Wild Diet:** Omnivorous, they eat grain, seeds, grasses, fruit, roots, and stems, and sometimes insects.

**Reproduction:** Breeds every 10-17 weeks throughout the year. An average of 5-10 young per litter.

**Predators:** Cats, dogs, hawks, owls, weasels, raccoons, snakes, skinks, and people.

**Notes:**

- They are a host to a range of diseases and parasites infectious to humans, the most serious being the bubonic plague.
- A relative of the white mouse, white mice are raised for scientific experimentation.
- House mice are major economic pests, consuming and despoiling crops and foodstuffs, and they have also been implicated in extirpations and/or extinctions of indigenous species in ecosystems they have invaded and colonized which are outside their natural range.
- The house mouse probably has a world distribution more extensive than any other mammal apart from humans. A mouse is extremely adaptable to any domestic environment.