

Our Arroyo Ecosystem



Long Tailed Weasel *Mustela frenata*

The long tailed weasel lives in a variety of habitats, though usually close to a source of water.

It has a very high rate of metabolism, and consumes approximately 40% of its body weight each day. Its diet consists mostly of small mammals, though it occasionally eats birds and insects. It uses sound and scent to track its prey, and with its long, thin body it can follow prey into their burrows.

It's an excellent swimmer, and can also climb trees.

Solitary except during mating season, it makes its home in abandoned burrows, in rotten logs, under tree roots or rocks, and makes a nest with grass and leaves lined with fur. Mostly active during the night, it can also be seen during the day. During mating season, and also when frightened, it releases a strong musk smell. When it feels threatened, it defends its territory very aggressively.

For more information, visit http://www.mnh.si.edu/mna/image_info.cfm?species_id=190

