



# Rodents & Lagomorphs of British Columbia (Royal BC Museum Handbooks)

*David W. Nagorsen*

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The rodents are the world's most numerous and diverse group of mammals. British Columbia is home to 45 species, from the tiny Western Harvest Mouse to the large and toothy Beaver, from the ubiquitous rats and squirrels to the endangered Vancouver Island Marmot. Just 7 species of lagomorphs inhabit BC: 5 rabbits and hares, and 2 pikas.

Most people regard these small mammals as pests or vermin, but we cannot overlook their importance to the province's ecosystems. Because of their abundance, rodents and lagomorphs are vital prey species for raptors and mammalian carnivores. Burrowing species play an important role in aerating soils. Some rodents, such as chipmunks, voles and flying squirrels, are also important in forest ecosystems because they consume truffles or underground fungi and disperse their spores on the forest floor.

*In Lagomorphs and Rodents of British Columbia*, David Nagorsen summarizes the most up-to-date information on these mammals. He discusses their general biology, including ecology, diet, anatomy, conservation and relations with humans. Illustrated keys aid in identification of the 52 species inhabiting the province. For each species, the author describes its natural history, identifying characteristics, taxonomy and conservation status in the province. Each species account is accompanied by illustrations and a distribution map.

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