

Eastern Cottontail

Sylvilagus floridanus

Family: Leporidae

Herbivore / Prey

Native to Virginia



The Eastern Cottontail is found throughout much of the eastern half of the United States and in all but the north western tip of Virginia. This rabbit is called the “cottontail” because it has a small, white tail resembling a cotton ball. It is heavily preyed upon, and has protruding, brown eyes with excellent vision. During the spring and summer months, they feed on plants such as grasses, clovers and fruits. They mainly consume twigs and bark during the winter months. Cottontails prefer a habitat with tall grasses and weeds to provide shelter and protection from predators.

Fun Facts

- Eastern Cottontail’s are often called the “Protein Pill” because they are heavily preyed upon by many species.
- A female (doe) can produce approximately 3-7 litters per year.
- Over half of the Red Fox’s diet is composed of Eastern Cottontails.
- They can run at approximately 18 mph.
- The Eastern Cottontail has almost twice the number of taste buds that a human has.