

Cottontail Rabbit



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GARDEN EARTH
NATURALIST
ECO-SERVICE CARDS

EASTERN COTTONTAIL RABBIT

Sylvilagus floridanus

IDENTIFICATION CLUES



- ◆ 14 - 17 inches long
- ◆ rusty brown fur with black tips in summer, gray-brown in winter; white belly and tail
- ◆ short front legs and long hind legs
- ◆ long ears



Where To Look

Rabbits like brushy areas with lots of hiding places. They can be found in woods, fields, gardens and lawns. They are most active in the evening and early morning.



Tracks and Other Signs

Rabbits nip vegetation off cleanly with their sharp incisors which is evidence of their presence in the garden. Their pellets (rabbit scat) are light brown and round and are found in piles.



Winter Adaptations

The eastern cottontail rabbit will use the burrows of other animals to escape extremely cold weather.



What It Eats

In the warmer months they feed on grasses and small plants. In the winter they will eat twigs and bark.



Predators and Other Dangers

Cottontails are prey to many different predators including owls, hawks, skunks, raccoons, snakes, coyote and house cats.



Did You Know...

The eastern cottontail rabbit has a short lifespan of only 15 months, but they are prolific breeders and produce about 3 - 4 litters a year of 1 - 12 babies each. They build nests of leaves and grasses, lined with fur, in depressions in the ground.