

# Isolation of *Leptospira ballum* from a Western Harvest Mouse (*Reithrodontomys megalotis*)

W. T. HUBBERT and M. N. ROSEN

*San Francisco Field Station, Communicable Disease Center, Public Health Service, U. S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, San Francisco, and Wildlife Investigations Laboratory, California Dept. of Fish and Game Sacramento*

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From April 27 to May 12, 1965, 29 mammals representing 10 species were trapped on the Gray Lodge Waterfowl Management Area, Butte County, California and examined to determine if any were *Leptospira* carriers by inoculation of kidney emulsion or urine into duplicate tubes of Fletcher's medium. These included: 7 adult male California ground squirrels (*Citellus beecheyi*), 5 adult male and 2 immature female blacktail jackrabbits (*Lepus californicus*), 2 adult female and 2 adult male feral cats (*Felis catus*), 2 adult male striped skunks (*Mephitis mephitis*), 1 adult male red fox (*Vulpes fulva*), 1 adult male Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), 1 adult female California vole (*Microtus californicus*), 1 adult female and 2 adult male house mice (*Mus musculus*), 2 adult male rabbits (*Sylvilagus sp.*), and 1 adult male Western harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys megalotis*).

After 14 days incubation at 30° C, only the tubes of media inoculated with urine from the *Reithrodontomys* yielded leptospire. The serotype of the isolate was determined to be *Leptospira ballum* by the Veterinary Public Health La-

boratory, Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Georgia.

*Leptospira ballum* has been isolated from a number of hosts in the United States, including: Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), black rat (*Rattus rattus*), and house mouse (*Mus musculus*) (Minette, 1964, Am. J. Trop. Med. Hyg., 13:826-832); hog nosed snake (*Heterodon platyrhinus*) (Ferris, et al., 1961, Cornell Vet. 51:405-419); striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) (Roth, et al., 1961, Am. J. Vet. Res. 22:308-312); Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*) (Yager, et al., 1953, Proc. Soc. Exp. Biol. Med. 84:589-590); Oldfield mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus*) and hispid cotton rat (*Sigmodon hispidus*) (Brown and Gorman, 1960, Am. J. P. H., 50:682-688); gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) and wildcat (*Felis rufa*) (McKeever, et al., 1958, Am. J. Trop. Med. Hyg., 7:646-655).

In addition, leptospirosis in a human with serologic evidence suggestive of *L. ballum* infection has been reported (Boak, et al., 1960 Calif. Med., 93:163-165). In this case, the etiologic agent was not isolated. Therefore a serotype-spe-