

# Eastern Cottontail

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Sylvilagus floridanus*

CLASS: Mammal

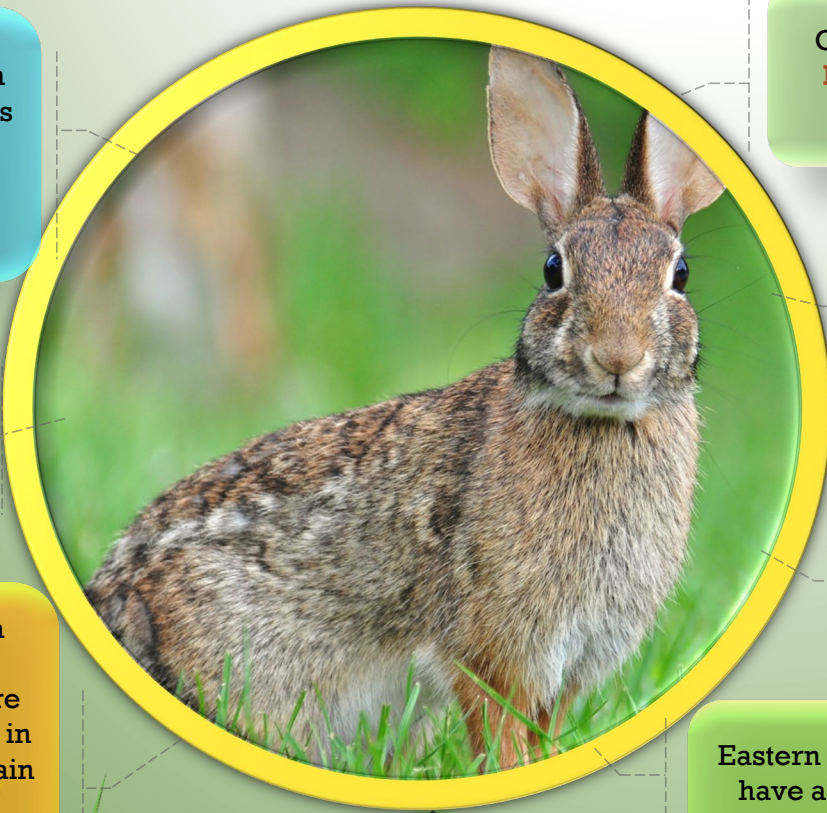
CONSERVATION STATUS: Least concern

Eastern Cottontails can sense predators from a **long distance** by standing on hind legs.

Eastern Cottontails eat **vegetation** almost exclusively.

They live in a variety of habitats but are most abundant in areas that contain a mixture of weeds, grasses, and short brush.

Cottontail populations have been declining over the past fifty years. This is due to the loss of early successional habitat (particularly woody escape cover) from converting farmland to other uses, changes in farming practices, and urbanization.



The Eastern Cottontail is **red-brown** or **gray-brown** in appearance.

The Eastern Cottontail is an **early successional species**.

Their most common predators are **hawks, owls, and foxes**.

Eastern Cottontails can have as many as **7-8 litters a year**, of 3-8 young each.

For any wildlife-related concerns, please call the LaRC Environmental Office (Ande Remington) at 757-864-8332  
[environmental.larc.nasa.gov](http://environmental.larc.nasa.gov)

Data obtained from the National Wildlife Federation, National Park Service, and the National Geographic



● Distribution

Map of the Eastern Cottontail's **habitat range** in North America.



When chased, Eastern Cottontails run in a zigzag pattern, running up to **18 mph** (29 km/h)!



Eastern Cottontail young are born **blind**. Their eyes begin to open after 4-7 days.

If you accidentally uncover an Eastern Cottontail's nest, recover it and **leave it alone**.

