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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Cuvier's Hutia

Cuvier's Hutia, *Plagiodontia aedium*, is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Also known as the Hispaniolan Hutia, this large, mostly arboreal (spending most of its time in trees), herbivorous rodent is one of just two remaining land mammals endemic to the island of Hispaniola (Dominican Republic and Haiti), but very little is known about its populations or biology.

Depending on the area it lives in, Cuvier's Hutia is under threat from a combination of habitat loss, hunting for food, persecution as a crop pest, and predation by introduced dogs, cats, rats and mongooses. The human population on Hispaniola is increasing, putting escalating pressure on the remaining forest, and Cuvier's Hutia has already been lost from much of its former range.

Although Cuvier's Hutia occurs in a number of protected areas, habitat loss is reported to be continuing within these. Further research is needed into this poorly known rodent, and suitable areas of habitat need to be properly protected. A recently initiated project is conducting field research to assess the species' status, threats and specific conservation requirements.

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