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Distinguishing Characteristics: Similar Sonoran Desert Mammals



White-tailed Deer
(*Odocoileus virginianus*)

Tail is distinctly fluffy and white. Animals will "flag" when alarmed by raising tail in the air while fleeing. Antler points branch from a single main beam (Figure A). Metatarsal gland is short (Figure C). Generally found at higher elevations.

Mule Deer
(*Odocoileus hemionus*)

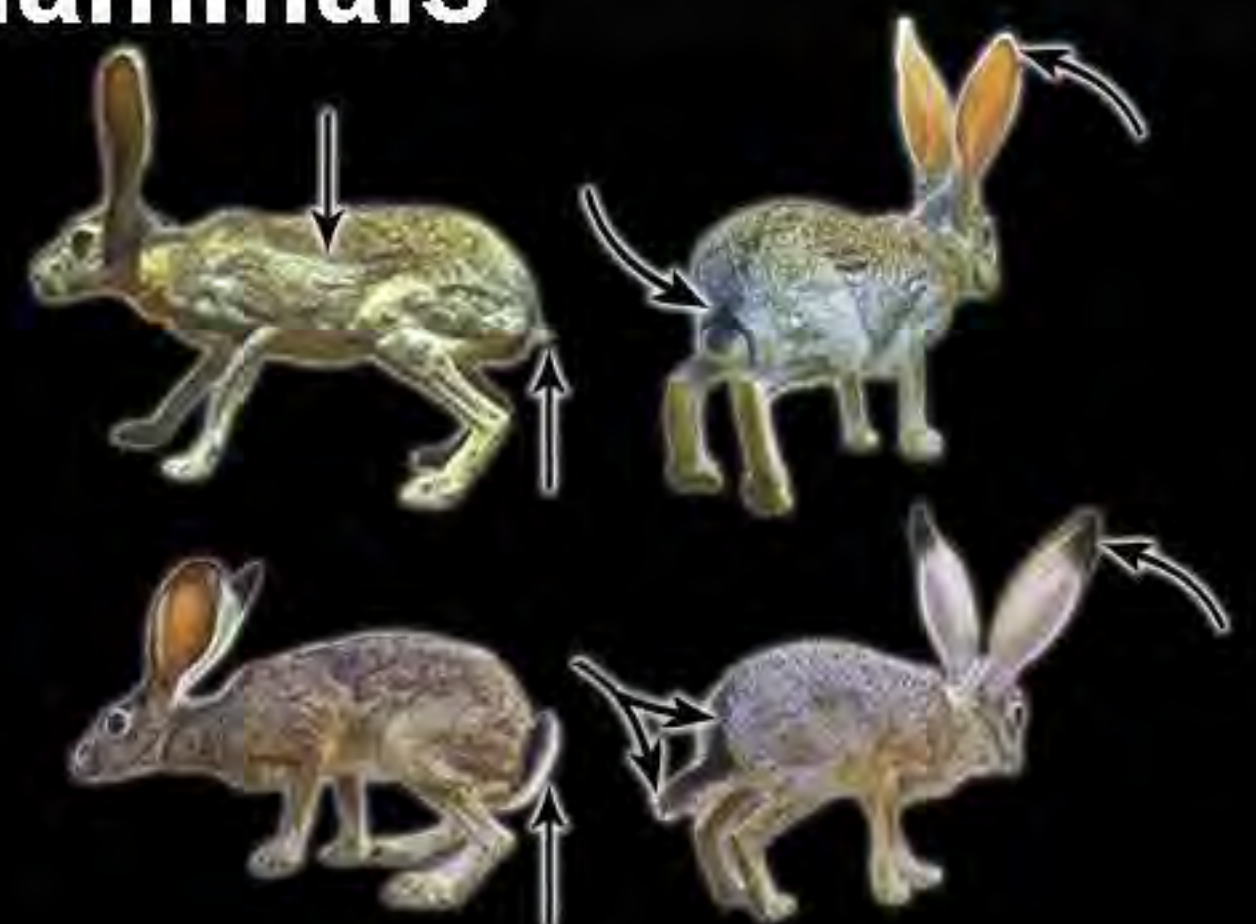
Tail is thin and has a black tip. Antlers fork as they grow (Figure B). Metatarsal gland is long (Figure C). Dark mask may be present on face, coming to a point below the eyes. Generally found at lower elevations.



Figure A
White-tailed Deer



Figure B
Mule Deer



UPPER:
Antelope Jackrabbit (*Lepus arizonae*)

Tail is noticeably short. The side body shows contrasting brownish-tan upperside and white underside. Ears have white halo around the edges.

LOWER:
Black-tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*)

Tail is long with a distinct black stripe that extends from the back down to the tip of the tail. Ears have black tips and black halo around the edges.



Figure C
White-tailed vs. Mule Deer
Metatarsal Glands



Figure D
Skunk Size and Body Ratio Comparison



Striped Skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*)

Thin white stripe present between ears and eyes. Stripe connects to a larger white stripe down back, which forks near tail. Tail length equal to or shorter than body length. Tail coloration variable.

Hog-nosed Skunk (*Conepatus leuconotus*)

Body is colored solid black on bottom and solid white on top. Snout is long, hairless and flat-ended. Legs are short and thick with downward curving front claws. Tail is all white.



Hooded Skunk (*Mephitis macroura*)

Bushy tail exceeds body length. Body has variable color patterns. Longer hair behind head creates a "hood." White markings may be present on face, but do not connect to body stripe.



Spotted Skunk (*Spilogale gracilis*)

Small body with several stripes along back and sides. White dot between the eyes. Tail is relatively short and tipped in white.

