

MICROMAMMAL SUBFOSSILS FROM A CAVE IN
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Recently studied surface sediments collected in 1941-42 by Paul McGrew from a cave in the Department of Copan, Honduras yielded the remains of at least 396 individual mammals representing 28 species. The most common remains from the cave are of shrews (*Cryptotis* spp.), hispid cotton rat (*Sigmodon hispidus*), and harvest mice (*Reithrodontomys* spp.). Multivariate and morphological studies of the *Cryptotis* material reveal the presence of at least three species: *C. parva orophila*, *C. merriami*, and a species similar to, but morphologically distinct from *C. goodwini*. At least three species of *Reithrodontomys* are also present. The taxonomically biased nature of the sample (remains are almost exclusively of small, nocturnal or crepuscular mammals) and the high quality of bone preservation in the site suggest owl pellet accumulation as the taphonomic vector.

Most specimens from the site can be assigned with confidence to modern species representative of a tropical, highland fauna similar to that found in the area today. However, some taxa appear to be atypical compared to modern forms and exhibit size variation similar to that seen among some small mammals recovered from late Pleistocene sites in other parts of Mesoamerica. Although the precise age of the material is unknown, radiocarbon dating of bone and charcoal from the site will be completed by June 1998. Continued study of this site will be critical in understanding the evolution of modern Neotropical mammalian faunas.