



Government of
Western
Australia

DEPARTMENT OF
Conservation
AND LAND MANAGEMENT



Conserving the nature of WA

PO Box 51
Wanneroo
WA 6946

Greetings Gina,

What a great set of photos of pebble-mound mice (PMM) burrows. Many thanks. I'm not surprised they were there. (Presumably) this species also occurs in the Gardner Range (on the northern fringe of the Tanami) and Purnululu, although we've only known it in WA for five or six years. In recent times it has also been recorded in the Victoria River District, just over the border and I have found an old mound in Keep River NP.

There has been some confusion about what species it is but a colleague in Queensland has been looking at the genetic relatedness of all the PMMs. It seems that it is the same species (Central PMM *Pseudomys johnsoni*) that has been recorded further east in the NT and probably closely related to the Kimberley Mouse (*Pseudomys laborifex*) which is not known to collect pebbles. But the jury is still out.

The mounds are quite different to those of the Pilbara PMM (*Pseudomys chapmani*) which usually builds huge mounds (up to 3+ m in diameter and 30+ cm high) and has entrances in 'volcano-like' cones on the mound, the entrances blocked by pebbles that the mice have to move to get in or out.

Looking carefully at the position of each pebble, you can clearly see that some have been moved so I'd say your mounds are "active".

Thanks also for the Bilby record. I'll pass it on to those who keep records.

Best wishes and again thanks.

Dr. A.N. (Tony) Start
Principal Research Scientist

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Ph 08 9405 5146