

INFORMATION ON BLACK-FOOTED FERRET SIGHTINGS WANTED



Black-footed Ferret



Long-tailed Weasel



European Ferret

The endangered Black-footed Ferret (*Mustela nigripes*) is probably the rarest mammal in North America. It is approximately 2 feet long including the tail. It is yellowish in overall color; has a black face-mask, tail tip, and feet; and a white snout. It is most often found in prairie dog towns. It has not been verified in New Mexico in many years.

WEASELS LOOK VERY SIMILAR!

The Long-tailed Weasel (*Mustela frenata*) may also have a black face-mask and black tail tip, but the feet are light colored. The body color is often reddish brown with a light belly. It is about half the size of the Black-footed Ferret. The Long-tailed Weasel is common in New Mexico, usually in brushy or wooded areas, where it hunts rodents. It is not normally associated with prairie dog towns.

Another member of the weasel family is the European Ferret or Polecat (*Mustela putorius*). It is about the same size as the Black-footed Ferret and can have similar markings. However, it has a more pointed muzzle, much more black on the tail, and bushier fur, giving it a heavy-bodied appearance. This domesticated animal is a popular pet. Released or escaped European Ferrets potentially may be found near towns and cities.

If you believe you have seen a Black-footed Ferret, please provide details (markings, location, date, presence of prairie dogs, etc.) to:

**Endangered Species Program
New Mexico Dept. of Game & Fish
P. O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Phone: (505) 476-8101**

