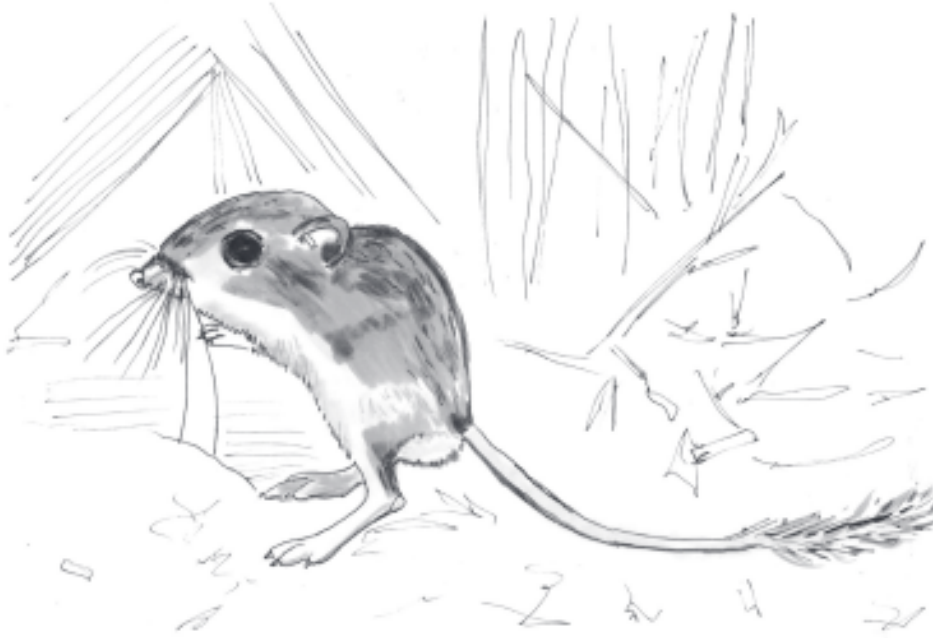


The Story of a Kangaroo Rat



It is daytime in the Mojave Desert. It is very hot. A kangaroo rat rests inside his burrow. A burrow is a hole in the ground. He dug the hole.

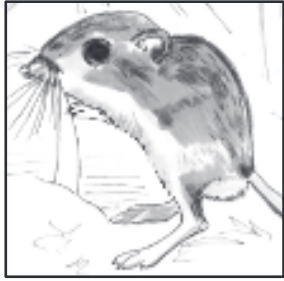
He dug tunnels around the hole.

It is cool in the burrow. The kangaroo rat waits. He will go out at night.

At night it is cool.

He leaves his burrow as the moon rises in the night sky. His back legs are very large and powerful. They support his whole body. He hops out into the night like a tiny kangaroo.

The Story of a Kangaroo Rat



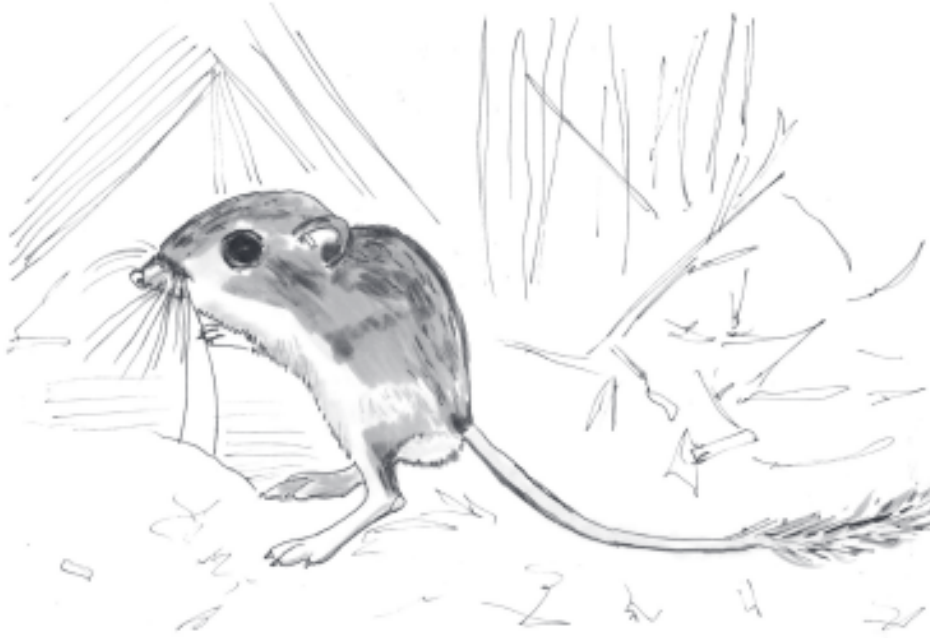
The kangaroo rat hops off in search of seeds. Seeds are his main source of food. The seeds in the Mojave Desert are very small. He stuffs hundreds of them in his cheek pouches. This is how he carries the seeds home. Back at home, the rat uses his front paws to push the seeds out of his mouth. Then he covers them with sand.

The kangaroo rat may sleep most of the day. But he has very good hearing. If he hears a small noise, he'll jump up, wide awake. Tonight he hears a small scraping noise. He sniffs the air. It's a snake! If the snake comes inside his burrow, the rat will be trapped. He goes outside to try to chase the snake away.

It's a gopher snake. The kangaroo rat warns the snake by stomping his foot. Stomp, stomp, stomp. Stomp, stomp, stomp. Nope, that's not working. Time to try throwing sand. The kangaroo rat uses his strong hind legs to kick sand in the snake's face. Sand in the eyes hurts. The snake doesn't like that at all. The snake slithers away and the kangaroo rat is safe for another day. Time to go back to his burrow and eat his buried seeds.



The Story of a Kangaroo Rat

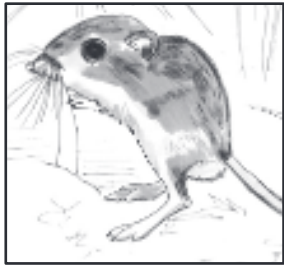


Daytime temperatures in California's Mojave Desert can get very hot. A kangaroo rat rests inside his burrow to keep cool. He dug his burrow and its surrounding tunnels into the ground under a large cactus plant.

The kangaroo rat sleeps away most of the day. He waits for nightfall, when outside temperatures will be cooler.

The kangaroo rat leaves his burrow just as the moon rises in the night sky. His large and powerful hind legs support his whole body. His front legs are much shorter and weaker. As he hops out into the night, he looks like a tiny kangaroo.

The Story of a Kangaroo Rat



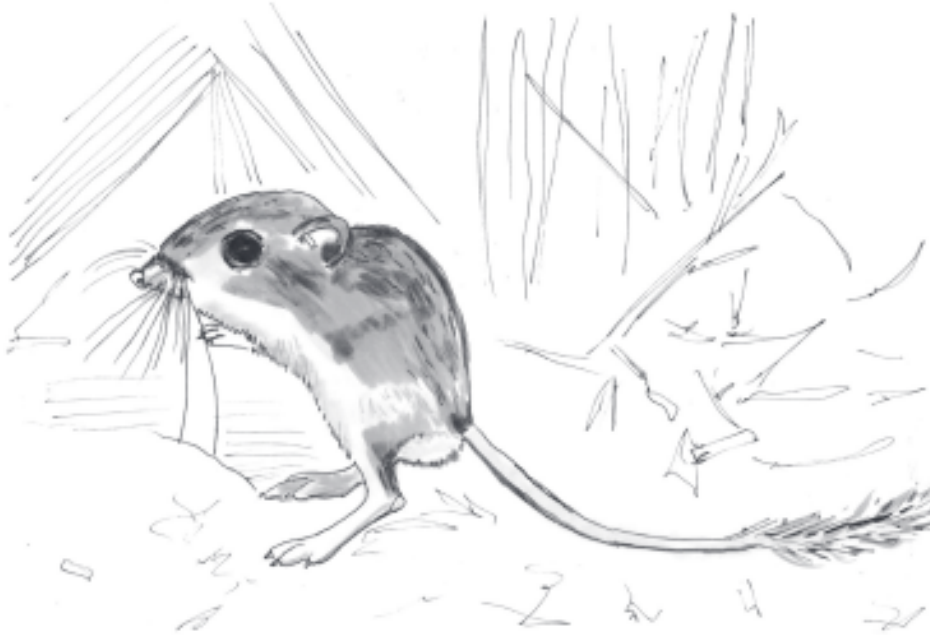
The kangaroo rat hops off in search of seeds, his main diet. The seeds in the Mojave Desert tend to be very small. He stuffs hundreds of them in his cheek pouches, using them like shopping bags to carry his food home with him. Back at home, the rat uses his front paws to push the seeds out of his mouth. Then he covers them with sand.

The kangaroo rat may sleep most of the day. But he has very good hearing. If he hears a small noise, he'll jump up, wide awake. Tonight he hears a small scraping noise. He sniffs the air. It's a snake! If the snake comes inside his burrow, the rat will be trapped with no escape. He goes outside to try to chase the snake away.

It's a gopher snake. The kangaroo rat warns the snake by stomping his foot. Stomp, stomp, stomp. Stomp, stomp, stomp. Nope, that's not working, it's time to try kicking some sand. The kangaroo rat uses his strong hind legs to kick sand in the snake's face. Sand in the eyes hurts and the snake doesn't like that at all. The snake slithers away from this sandy punishment. Victorious, the kangaroo rat is safe for another day. Time to go back to his burrow and eat his buried seeds.



The Story of a Kangaroo Rat



Daytime temperatures in California's Mojave Desert reach scorching heights. To beat the heat, a kangaroo rat rests comfortably inside the burrow he carefully excavated beneath a towering cactus plant. He knows that in the daytime, it's cooler underground than above. The kangaroo rat is nocturnal, which means that he sleeps all day and is active at night. Kangaroo rats are very active. They cover a lot of ground in a single night. The rat waits for nightfall when the outside temperatures drop and he won't overheat.

The kangaroo rat exits his burrow just as the moon rises in the sky. His large and powerful hind legs support his whole body. He moves about by hopping on them. His front legs are shorter, smaller, and weaker. He uses them more like arms. As he jumps out into the night, he looks just like a tiny kangaroo.

The Story of a Kangaroo Rat



The kangaroo rat hops off into the night in search of seeds, his main diet. The seeds in the Mojave Desert tend to be very small. He stuffs hundreds of them in his cheek pouches at one time. He uses his cheek pouches like shopping bags to carry his food home with him. Back at home, the rat uses his front paws to push the seeds out of his mouth. Then he covers the seeds with sand.

The kangaroo rat may be asleep most of the day, but he is not unaware. Kangaroo rats have sharp hearing and sensitive noses. If he hears a small noise, he'll jump up, wide awake. Tonight he hears a small scraping noise coming from above. He sniffs the air—it's a snake! If the snake comes inside his burrow, he'll be doomed. He goes outside to defend his burrow and try to scare the slithering serpent away.

It's a gopher snake. The kangaroo rat warns the snake by stomping his foot. Stomp, stomp, stomp. Stomp, stomp, stomp. Nope, that's not working. Time to up his game. The kangaroo rat uses his strong hind legs to kick sand in the snake's face. Sand in the eyes hurts. The snake doesn't like that at all. The snake slithers away. The kangaroo rat is safe for another day. Victorious, the rat returns to his burrow to eat his buried seeds for the night.

