

THE EVOLUTION OF THE HOUSE MOUSE

The origins of the house mouse lie in present-day Iran. From there it divided into several subspecies, three of which have spread across the planet. The Eastern European house mouse (*Mus musculus musculus*) and the Southeastern Asian house mouse (*Mus musculus castaneus*) began their spread to northern and southern Asia around 9000 years ago, while the Western European house mouse (*Mus musculus domesticus*) set off about 6000 years ago and reached Western Europe 3000 years ago. In the last few centuries, the house mouse has travelled on ships from Europe to the Americas, southern Africa, and islands in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Along the European climatic divide, the ranges of the Western European and Eastern European house mouse merge.

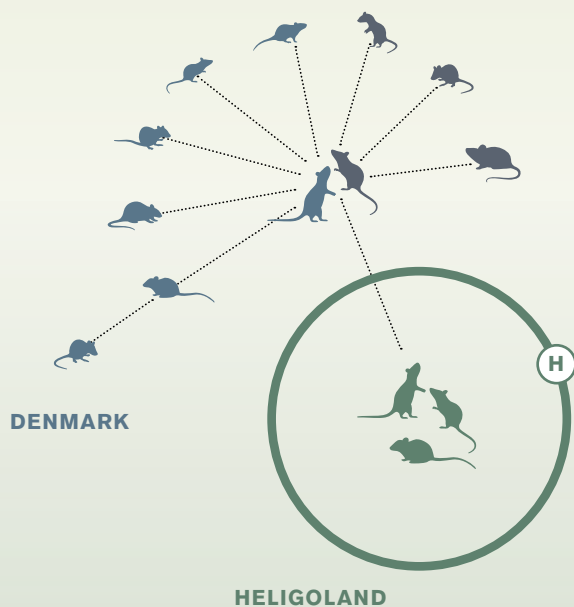


SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

THE HELIGOLAND MOUSE

The various house mouse populations in Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark differ from each other only slightly. The living conditions on the island of Heligoland, however, are so specialized that in just a few hundred years, a new species has emerged there: the Heligoland mouse.

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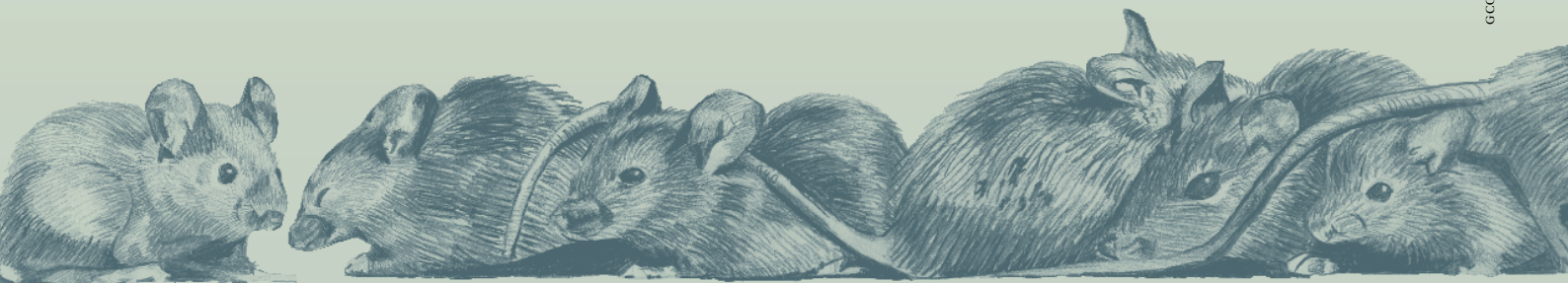
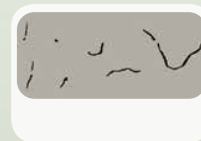


MICE WITH CHARACTER

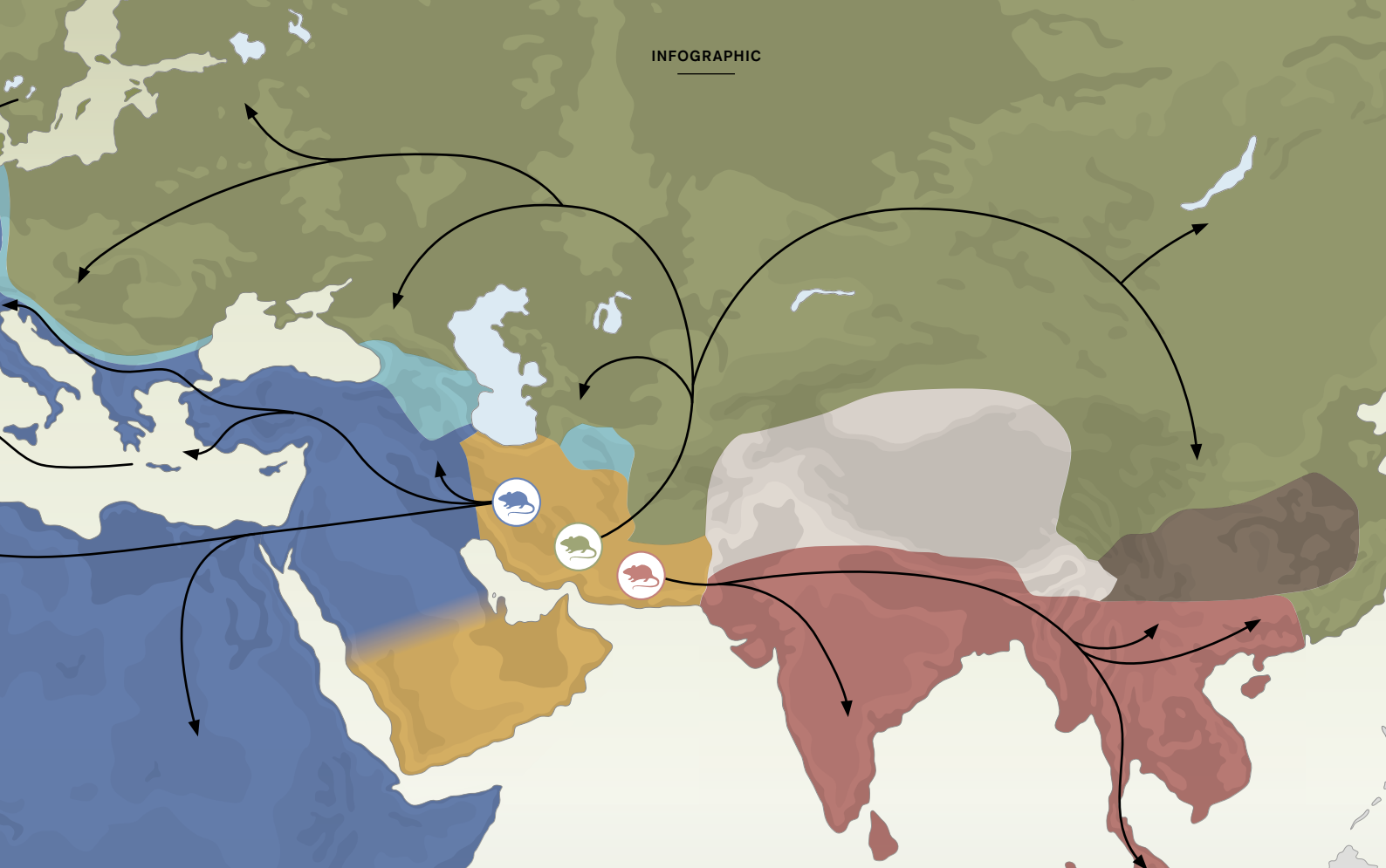
Mice have individual personalities. As with humans, some individuals are brave and some are fearful, some are peaceful and some are aggressive, some are shy, and some are inquisitive.



MOUSE LANGUAGE

Mice communicate using ultrasound, with an innate “language” comprising very complex sequences of sounds. These sounds differ between subspecies. Females are particularly communicative with other females.



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-  Heligoland mouse
-  Western European house mouse
-  Eastern European house mouse
-  Mixing of Western European and Eastern European house mouse
-  Southeastern Asian house mouse
-  Different, partly still unknown subspecies
-  Mixing of Eastern European and Southeastern Asian house mouse
-  No house mice

FOREIGN GENES IN THE GENOME

The subspecies of the house mouse have diverged genetically as they have adapted to different environmental conditions, although an exchange of adaptive gene regions still takes place.

