

Shadow Examples

Here are some examples of various shadows that have either been bred here or lived here. So far, we've had shadows in black, midnight blue, Russian midnight, American blue, Russian blue, and Russian silver. Other colors are possible, but I have not worked with them yet. The shadow effect is easiest seen on self or Irish rats on dark colored rats.

The shadow gene is thought to be very similar to the mottling gene in mice. It is dominant to non-agouti yet recessive to agouti. It can create a range of appearances from shadowing (silver bellies) to tortishells to the mock-agouti effect. In mice with the mottled (a^m) mutation, the mice can appear jet-black, tortishelled, or agouti. It is suspected that the shadow and tortishell traits in rats is due to one agouti allele that behaves similarly to the mottled mutation in mice. The shadow effect can range from very faint, almost unseen to a very bright silver. Ideally, shadows should have the brightest silver belly possible. Poor quality shadows will be difficult to tell from a color fault. Shadows have also been called melanistics. In order to produce shadows, one or both of the parents must be a shadow, tortishell or mock-agouti. I have not worked with shadows on an agouti base myself, but another breeder added it to an agouti base and no change was seen.

Please be patient, this page has quite a few pictures and may take a minute or two to load.

Black Shadows

Black shadows have the most dramatic look to their coats. They are genetically black rats that have silver bellies. They often develop brown, silver and ticked hairs along their sides and occasionally their backs while their bellies remain silver.

These are young shadow and non-shadow black rats. It is easy to tell a shadow rat from a non-shadow rat at a very young age.



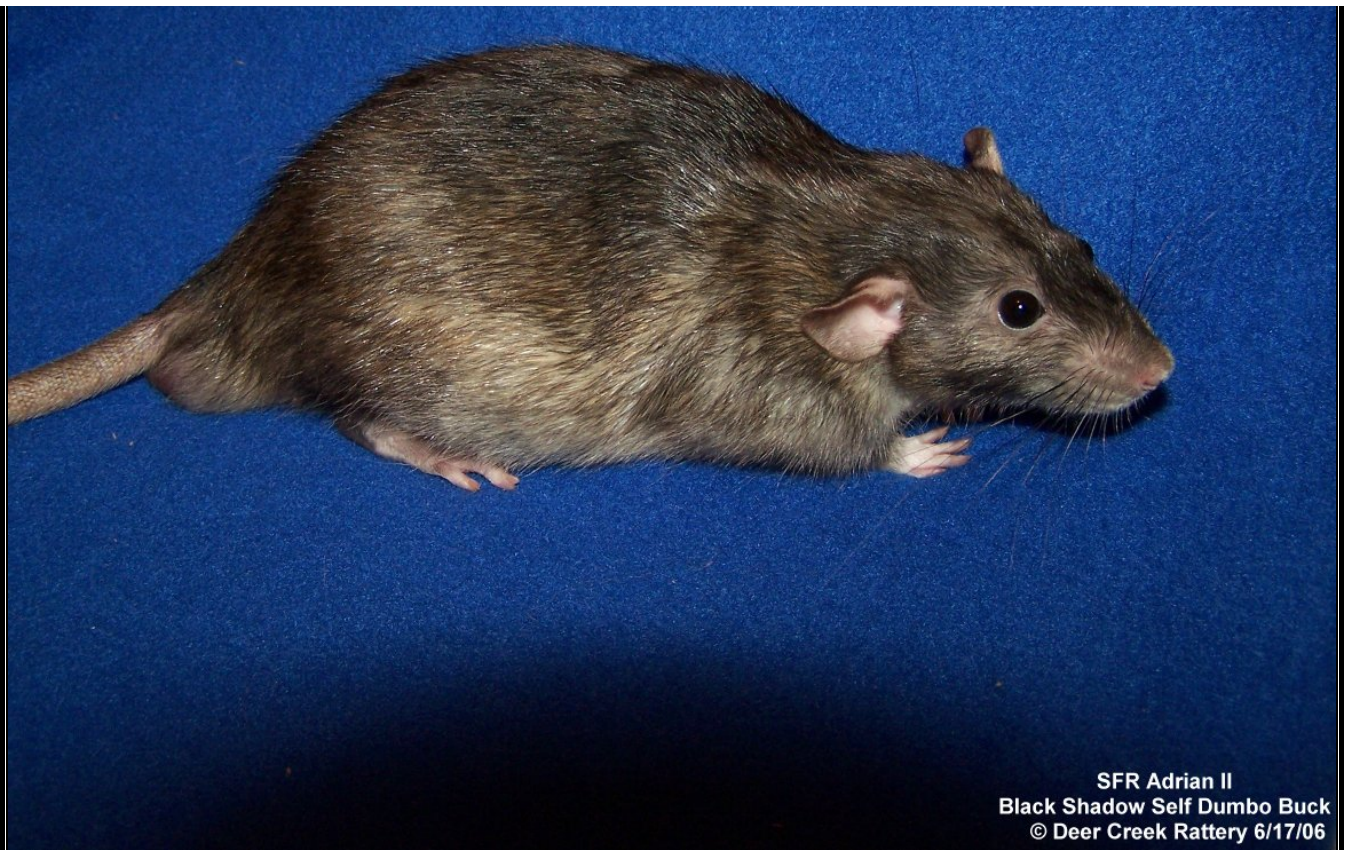
Another belly shot of a black shadow and a black non-shadow.



This is the side of SFR Adrian II, a black self shadow rat at approximately 6 weeks old. Note the silvering of the hairs on the side. Sometimes, some of these hairs will develop a slightly ticked look and some may turn brown. This is called the mock-agouti effect.



This is SFR Adrian II as an adult. He has developed some of the ticked and brown hairs on his side. He's displaying the mock-agouti effect.



This rat is RH Poison Whiskey, a black berkshire shadow. He also has the silver hairs on the side and even though he's a berkshire, it's clear to see the shadow effect in his coat.



RH Poison Whiskey
Black Berkshire Shadow Buck
© Deer Creek Rattery 6/23/06



This is a side picture of RH Poison Whiskey. You can clearly see where his shadowing starts. He is not displaying the mock-agouti effect.



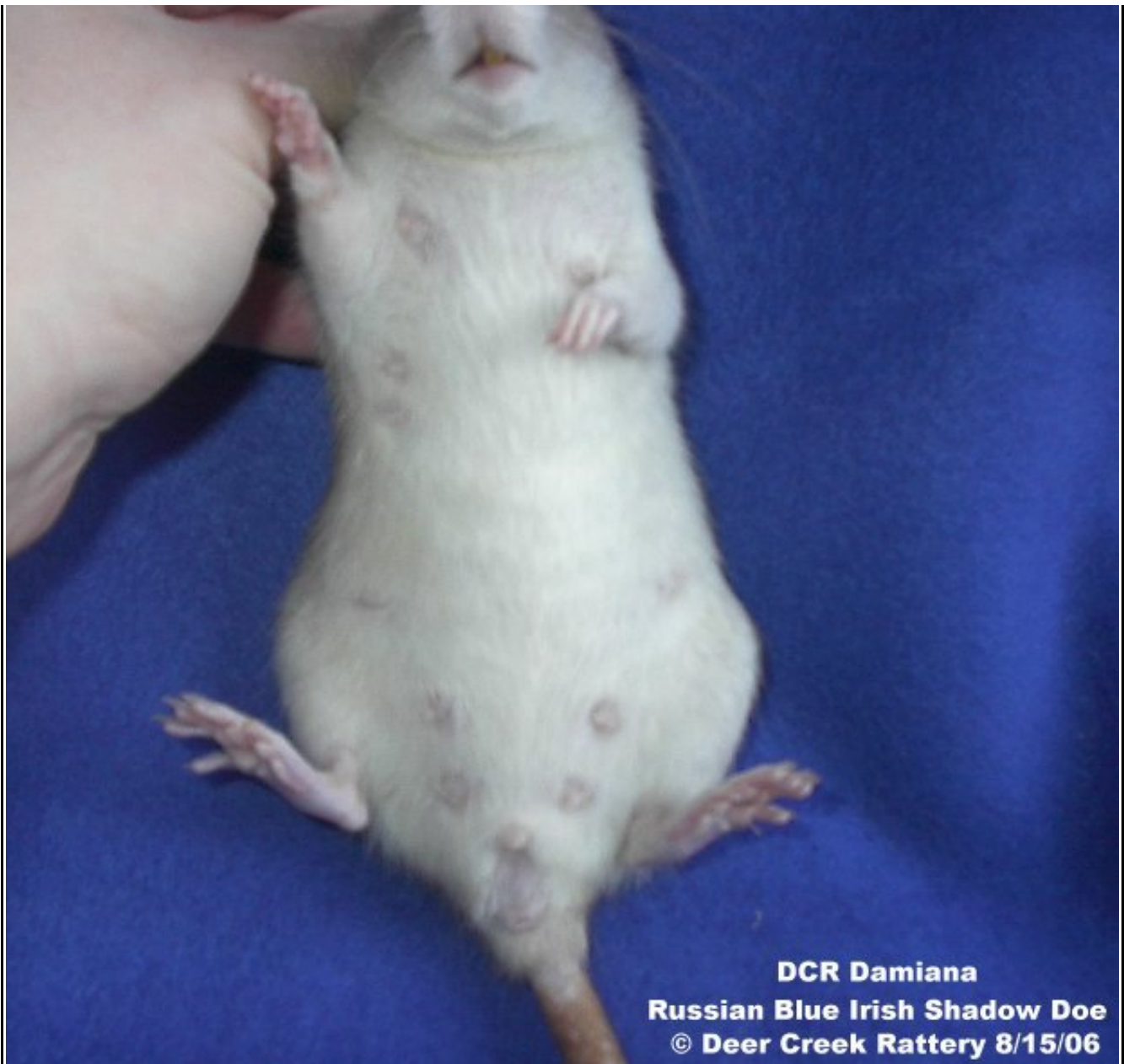
Russian Blue Shadows

Russian blue shadows tend to have a very light coat as well as the silver belly of a shadow. They show the same heathering as Russian blue non-shadows, but it is often hard to see, especially in pictures. If one did not know, you could almost mistake a Russian blue shadow for a very poor American blue with no silver undercoat. The very first Russian blue shadow born here was DCR Damiana. She was the best example of a Russian blue shadow that did not display the mock-agouti effect.

DCR Damiana at 15 months old. She was much lighter than a standard Russian blue.



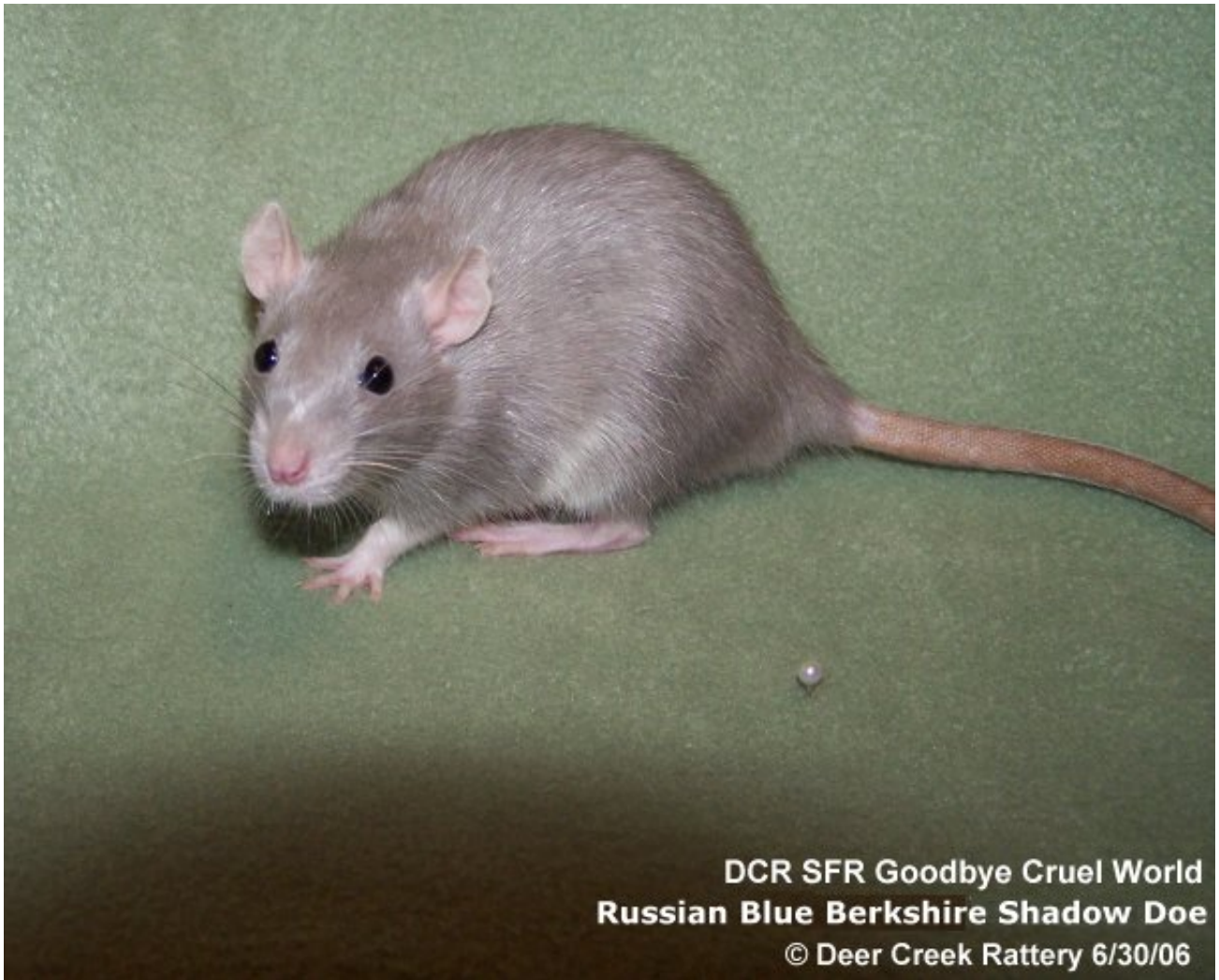
DCR Damiana's belly. She had a small strip of white in the center of her belly. She never displayed any of the mock-agouti effect but had the silver belly.



This is DCR SFR Coma White, a Russian blue berkshire shadow doe. This is Damiana's daughter. She displayed the silver belly, but due to being a berkshire, it was very hard to see. She showed the mock-agouti effect very slightly.



This is DCR SFR Goodbye Cruel World. She is a Russian blue berkshire shadow doe. She is the 1/2 sister to Coma White and related to Damiana. She also had the silver belly, but like Coma, was a berkshire and it was hard to see the shadowing. She never displayed the mock-agouti effect.

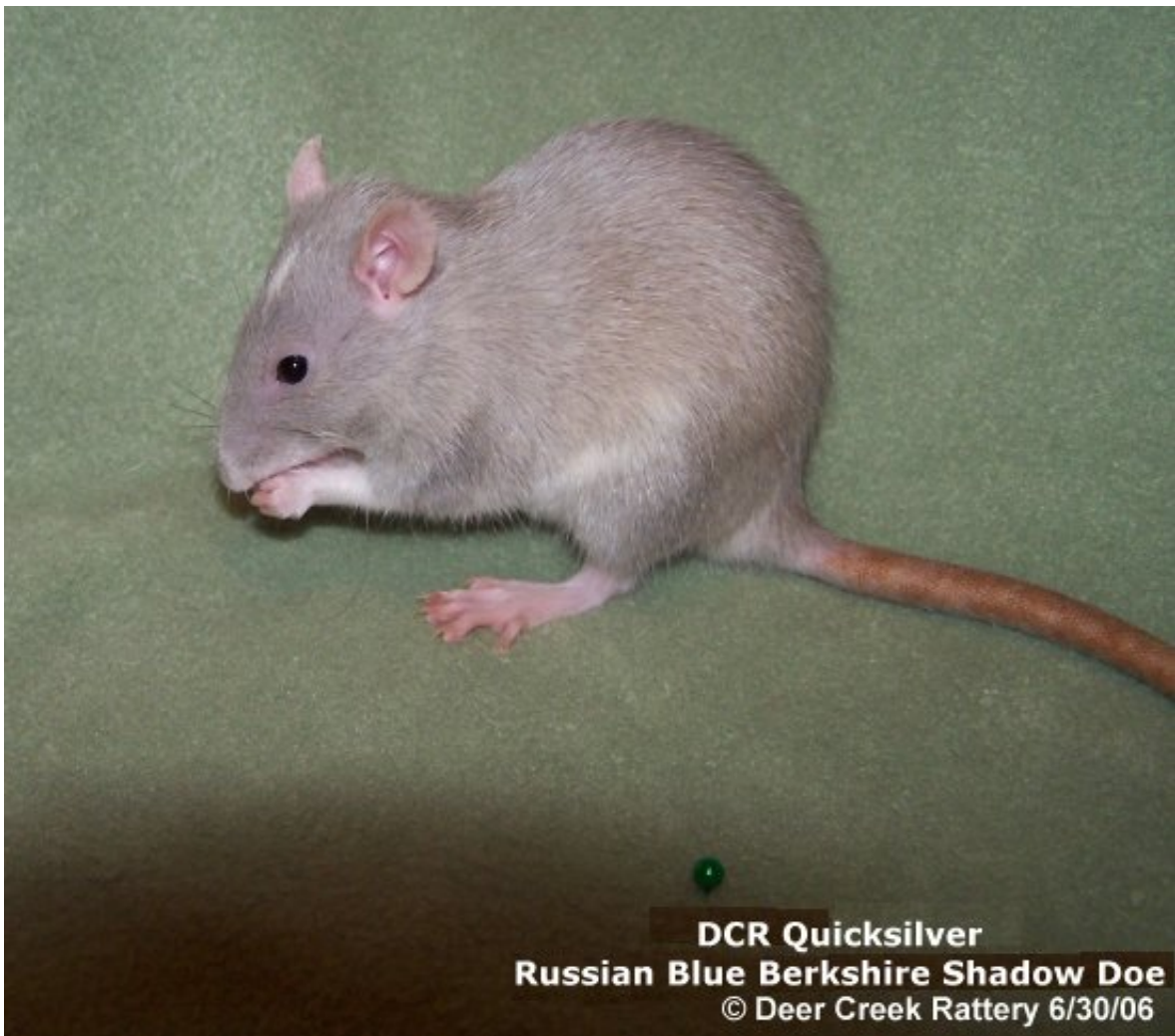


This is DCR SFR Shine On You Crazy Diamond. This is the brother to Goodbye Cruel World. He was also a Russian blue berkshire shadow. He has the typical silver belly along with the mock-agouti effect on his sides.



DCR SFR Shine On You Crazy Diamond
Russian Blue Berkshire Shadow Buck
© Deer Creek Rattery 6/23/06

This is DCR SFR Quicksilver, a Russian blue berkshire shadow doe. She is the sibling of Shine On You Crazy Diamond and Goodbye Cruel World. She has the silver belly, but it's hard to see because of her berkshire markings. She has a slight mock-agouti effect to her coat.



This is DCR SFR Cymbaline, the sister to Goodbye Cruel World and Shine On You Crazy Diamond. She is a Russian blue berkshire shadow satin doe. She's pictured here at about 8 weeks of age.





This is Cymbaline at approximately 12 weeks. Her coat has taken on the mock-agouti look.





This is Cymbaline at about 1 year old. She has completely changed her coloring and now it's hard to tell that she is a Russian blue.



This is DCR On The Beach. He is a Russian blue blazed berkshire shadow buck. He is the offspring of DCR SFR Shine On You Crazy Diamond and DCR SFR Coma White.

He is clearly showing the mock-agouti effect, to a much higher degree than either of his parents. He is about 9 months old in this picture. He started out the light color of his mother and with each molt, he got more and more brown in color.

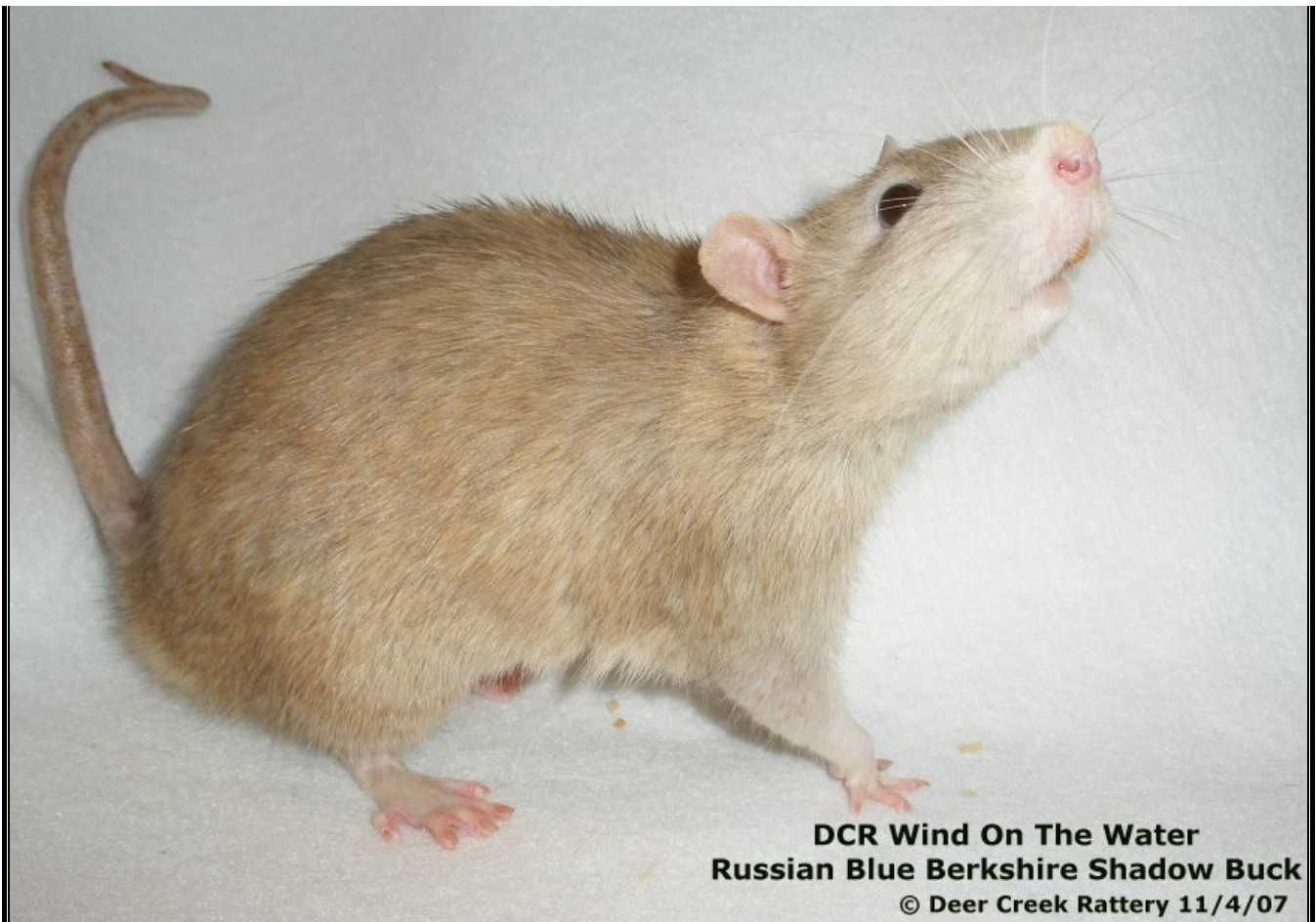


This is DCR Wind On The Water, the Russian blue berkshire shadow brother of DCR On The Beach. He was about 4 weeks old in this photo. He started out a pale Russian blue color.





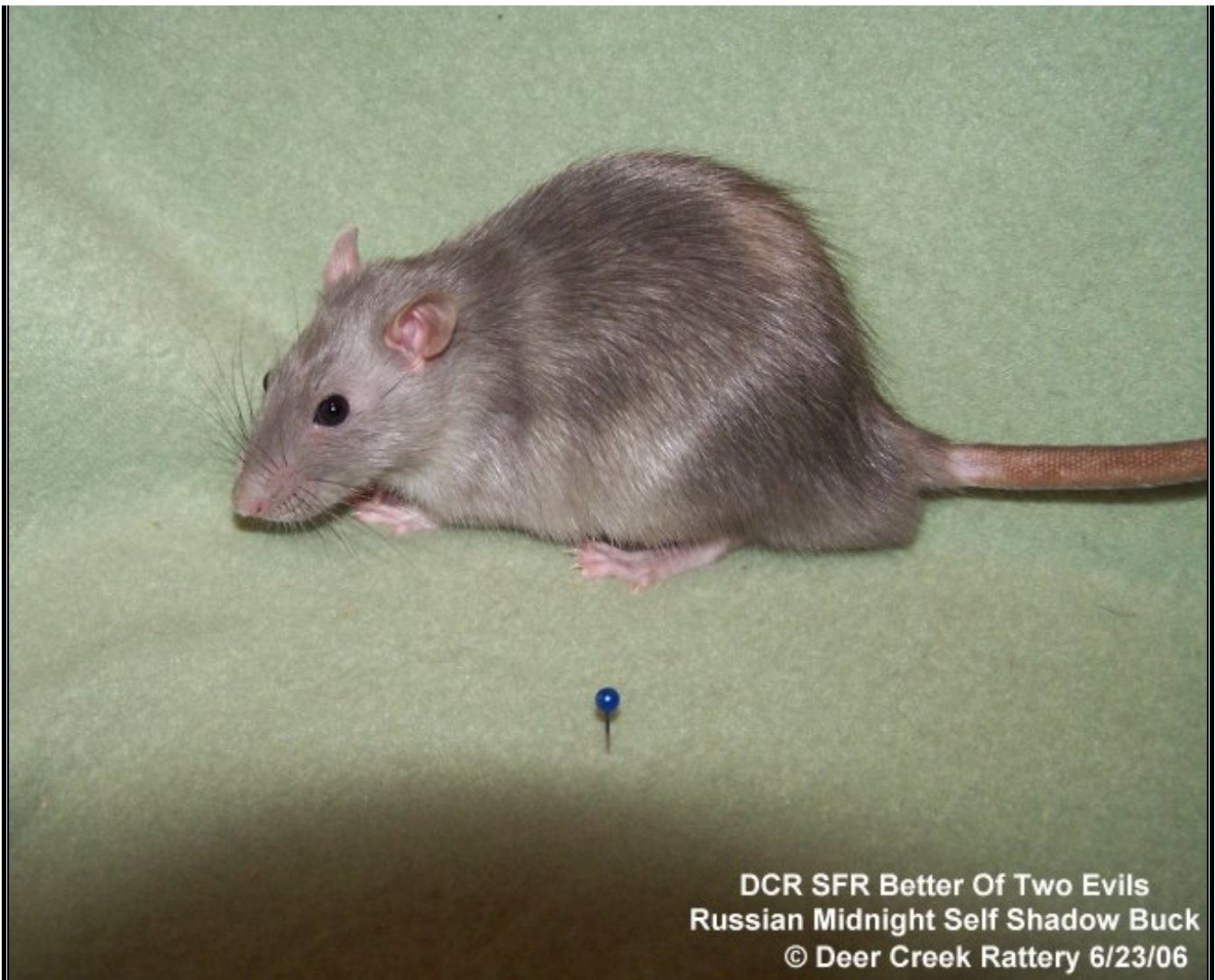
This is Wind On The Water at age 9 months. Much like his brother, his coat changed quickly and dramatically. The mock-agouti effect is very strong on this boy.



Russian Midnight Shadows

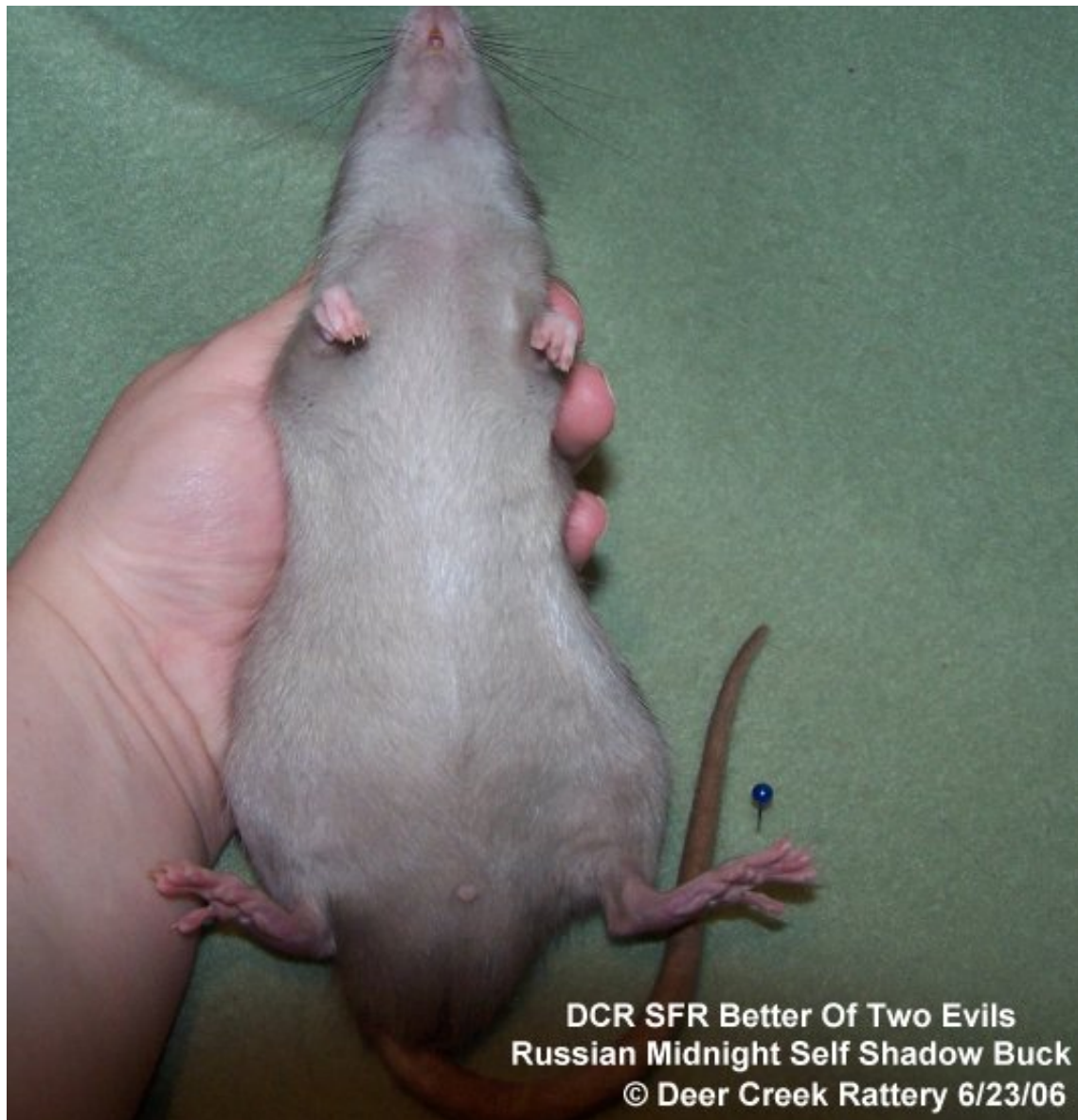
Russian midnight shadow rats are darker than Russian blue shadows, but not as dark as Midnight blue shadows. They show the silver belly like normal shadows, but so far they haven't displayed the mock-agouti effect to the extent that the Russian blue shadows have. We have only had a couple of Russian midnight shadows born here so far so we don't have as many pictures of them.

This is DCR SFR Better Of Two Evils aka Duo. He is the son of DCR Damiana. He is a Russian midnight self shadow buck. He has a silver belly and a very slight mock-agouti effect on his back, but not on his side.

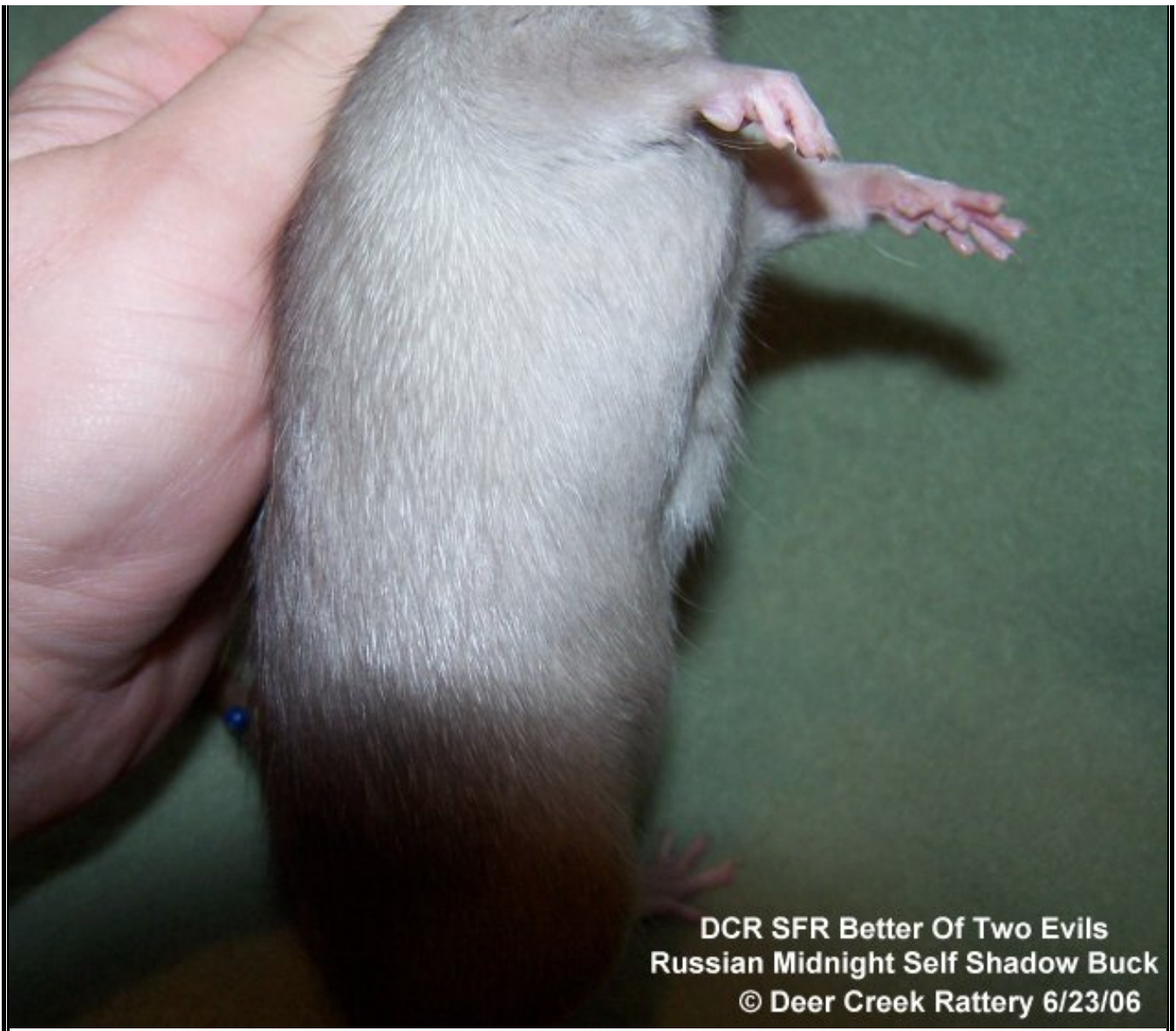


This is Duo's belly. You can clearly see how light it is compared to the dark coloration of his back.





This is Duo's side showing the silver belly and silvering on his side.



American Blue Shadows

I've only owned American blue shadow so far so I'm not as familiar with them as I am the Russian blue shadows. It is pretty hard to tell a poor quality American blue from an American blue shadow unless it shows the mock-agouti effect.

This is RH Devil In The Bottle aka Diablo, an American blue self shadow buck. He is DCR Damiana's nephew and RH . He is about 4 weeks old in this picture.



Here is Diablo at about 3 months old. He has started to show the mock-agouti effect on his back. Instead of more brown, it was a bit more cream than on the Russian blue shadows.



Here is Diablo's side. You can see alot of silver hairs on his side and the start to his silver belly.





Here is Diablo's very silver belly.

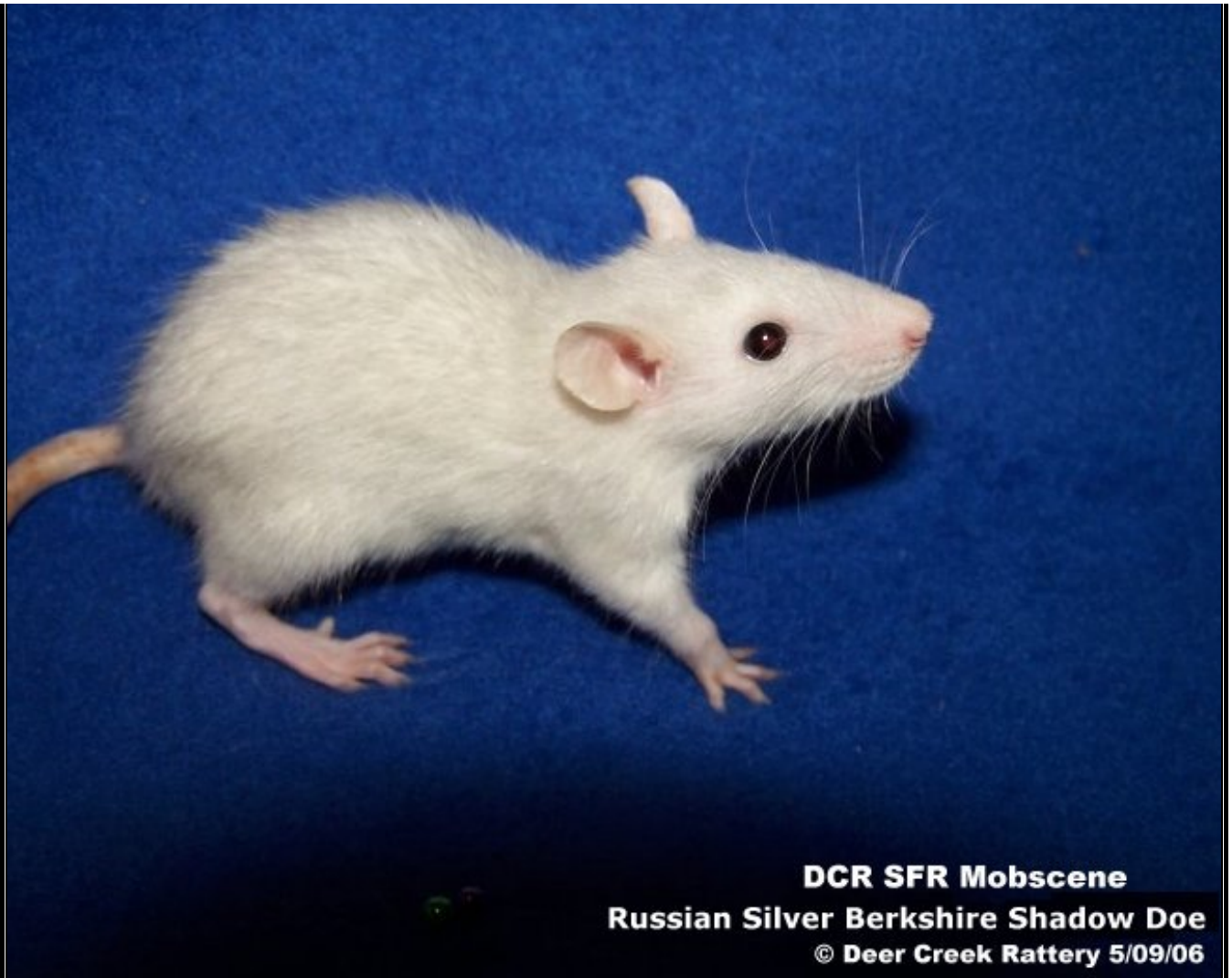




Russian Silver Shadows

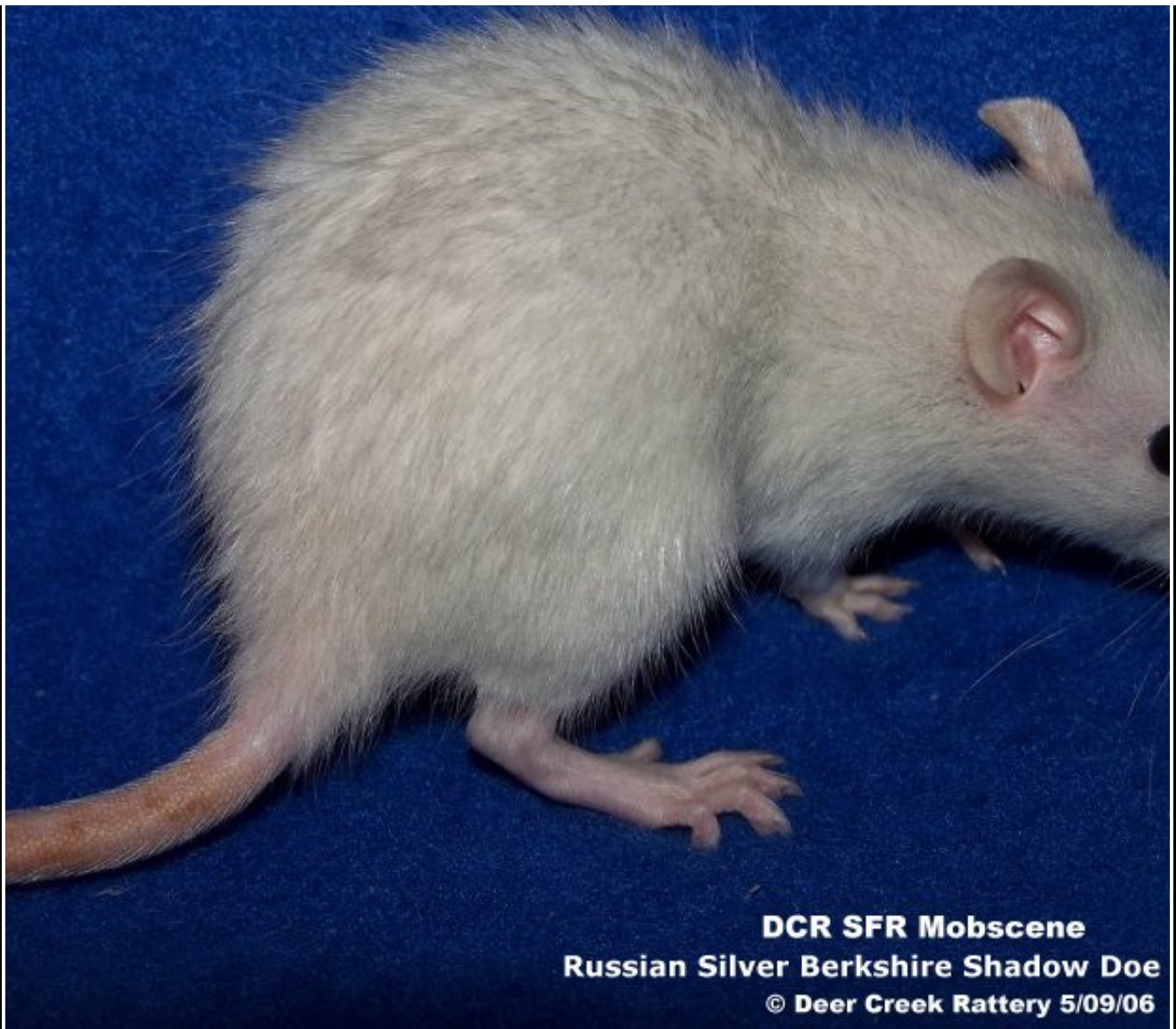
Russian silver shadows tend to be a lot paler than regular Russian silvers. They have the typical silver belly, but it is pretty hard to see due to their extremely light color. I don't really focus on them because the shadowing does wash out the gorgeous color of a Russian silver so I don't have a lot of pictures of them.

This is DCR SFR Mobscene, daughter of DCR Damiana. She is very pale.



DCR SFR Mobscene
Russian Silver Berkshire Shadow Doe
© Deer Creek Rattery 5/09/06

This is a close-up view of Mobscene's fur. It has a very slight mock-agouti look to it now, but I don't have a good picture of it. This picture was taken when she was about 6 weeks old.



Midnight Blue Shadows

Midnight blue is thought to be the previously extinct sand gene (sd) on a black base originally discovered by Macy & Stanley at the Oklahoma City Zoo. Currently, all of the midnight blues here are berkshire and shadowed. It is possible to have unmarked and unshadowed midnight blues though. We are working hard to separate markings and the shadowing from the midnight blue line. Unfortunately, marking genes can be very stubborn and since I don't want to overbreed this line, it is a slow process. It is a simple recessive that turns black pigment a dark grey colour, between black and Russian blue in intensity. It does not affect eye colour or yellow pigment.

6H Mesmer was my very first Midnight blue shadow. He was also a berkshire who carried Russian blue. When he first came here, he did not show any signs of shadowing or the mock-agouti effect. Here is Mesmer at 3 months old, showing very few signs of the mock agouti effect

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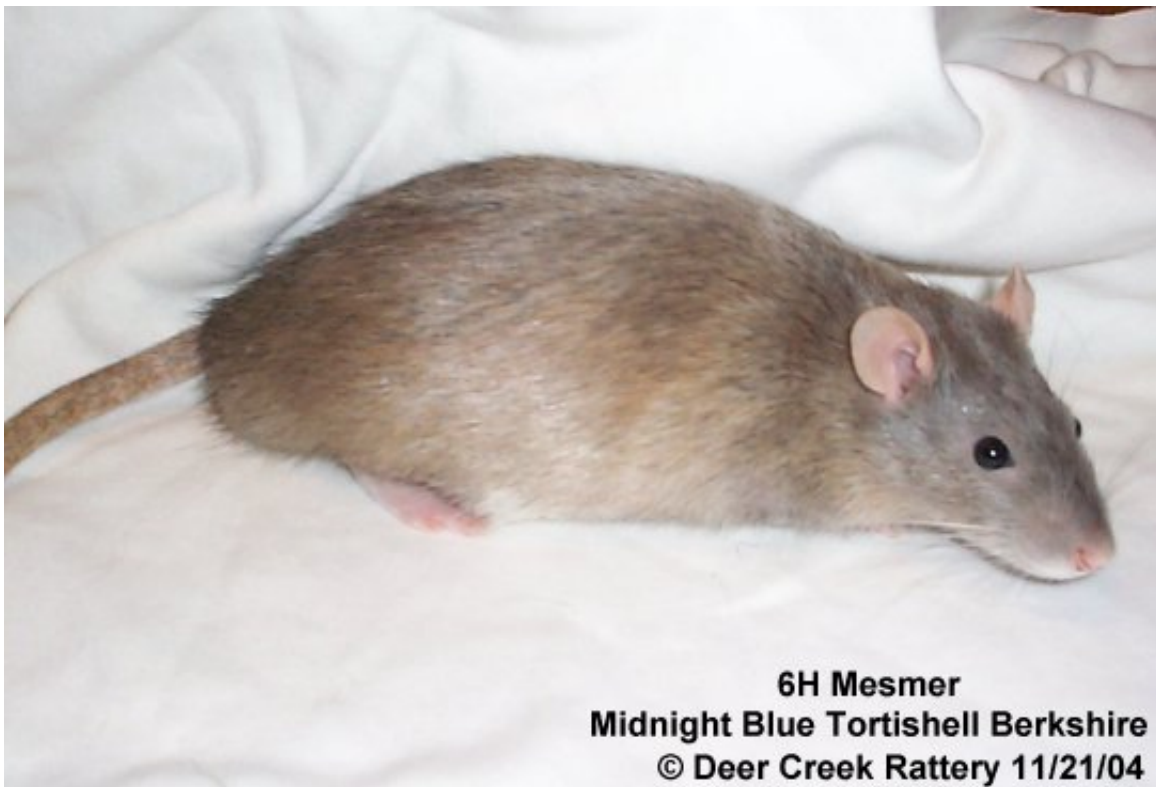


Mesmer again at 3 months old.



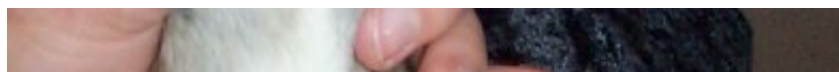


The next pictures are Mesmer at about 4.5 months old. He is showing alot more of the mock-agouti effect in the following pictures.





Here is Mesmer's belly showing the shadowing.





This is SFR Sauda, Mesmer's granddaughter at about 6 weeks old. She is a Midnight blue berkshire shadow dumbo doe. She had a slightly silver belly as a youngster, but no mock-agouti effect.



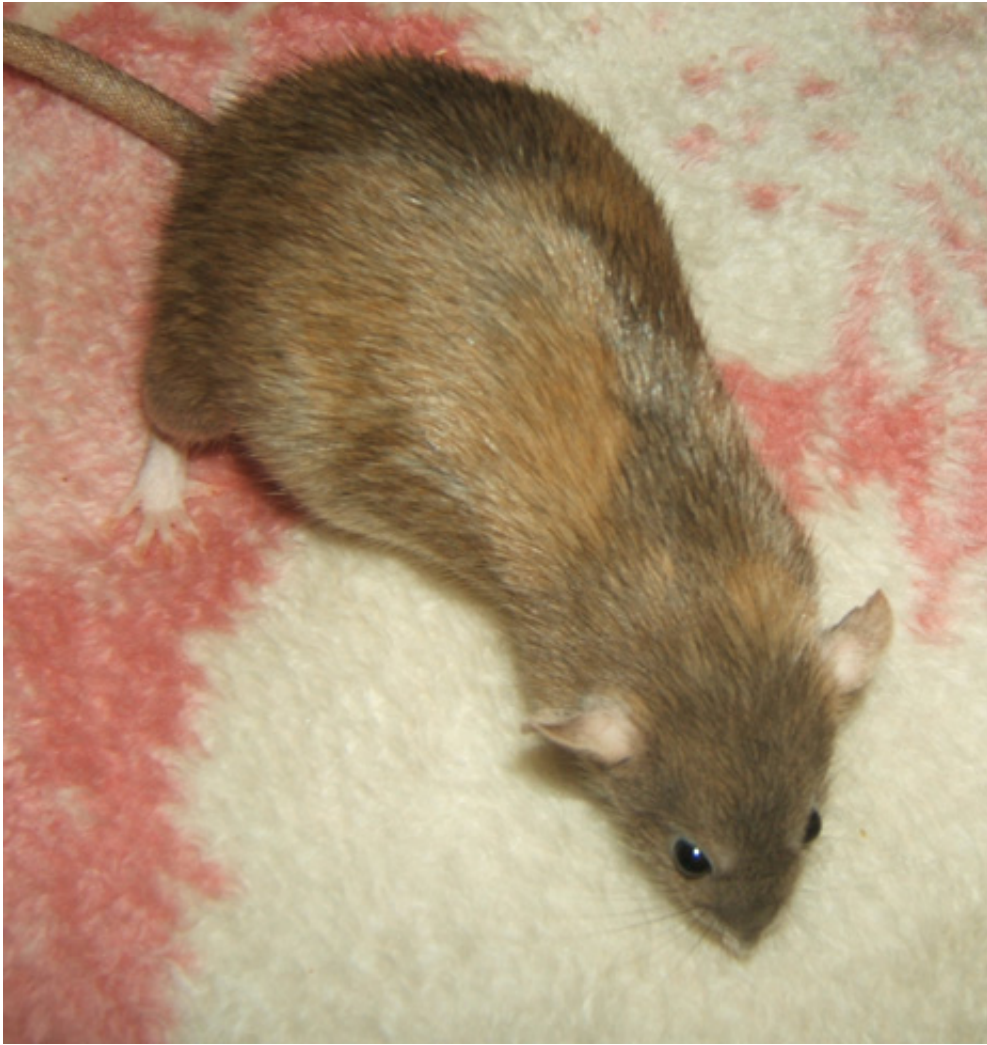
SFR Sauda at about 12 weeks old. She is still not showing the mock-agouti effect.





Here is Sauda at about 7 months old in this picture. She is showing the mock-agouti effect and the beginning of the tortishell effect (as seen in the picture below this one).





SFR Lae is also a Midnight blue berkshire shadow dumbo doe and Sauda's sister at 6 weeks.





Lae at about 5 months old, just starting to show more silvering on her sides as well as a very faint mock-agouti effect on her side.



Mock-Agouti Effect

The mock-agouti effect can be very subtle or very extreme. It can be on a rat's side or throughout the entire coat. In some rats, it can completely change the color of their coat making it very difficult to tell the rats true color. See pictures of the mock-agouti

effect above.

Tortishell Effect

SFR Duncan was the best example of the tortishell effect in this line so far. He was born a midnight blue berkshire shadow, though for a while we thought he may have been a midnight mink. Some of the pictures are mislabeled. He did carry mink and pearl but was not mink-based after all. He started changing at around 6 weeks. His coat took on a brownish hue in spots and at around 7 months old went through the most dramatic change. He started developing huge brown swirls in his coat that contrasted with the midnight blue. It's very striking. His coat proceeded to change throughout his life, the patterns of the swirling would change with each molt. He maintained these swirls until the day he died. It was very unique and was very interesting to see. Since Duncan, I have not had a tortishell that had this amount of swirling. I have had several rats develop smaller patches of brown or cream in their coats, but nothing to this extent.

This is SFR Duncan at around 6 weeks old. Note that he's already developed some of the brownish hairs on his sides.



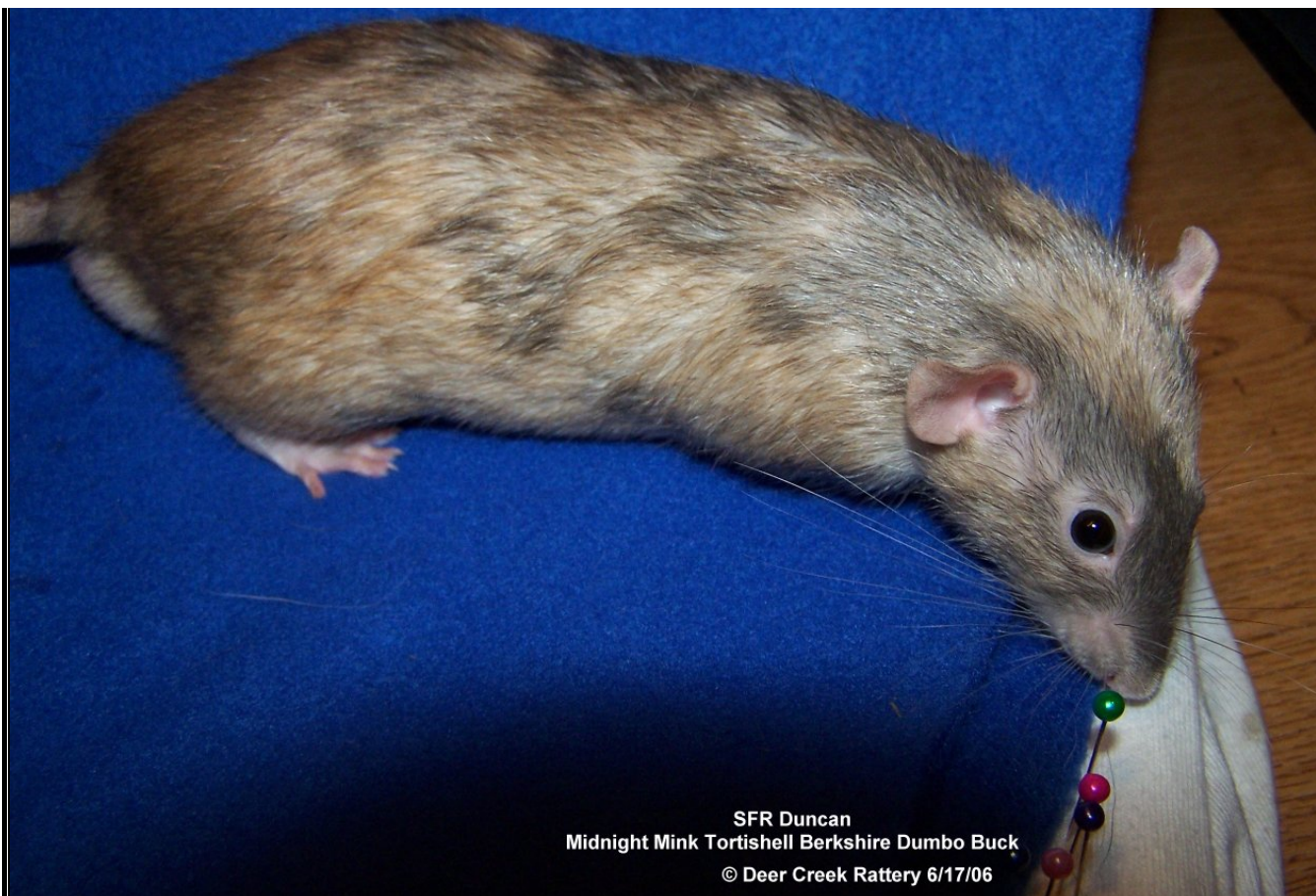


This is age 7 months when the swirling started in his coat. The following pictures will show the dramatic difference between the colors.



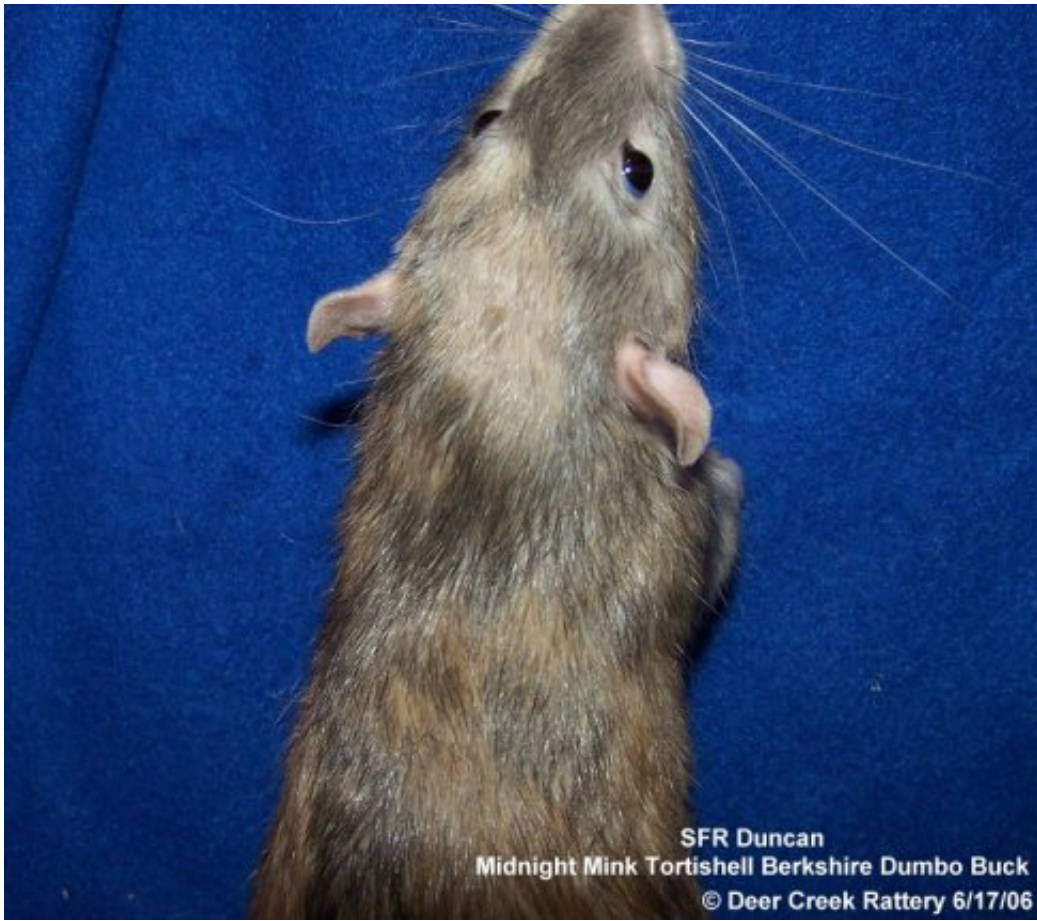
SFR Duncan
Midnight Mink Tortishell Berkshire Dumbo Buck
© Deer Creek Rattery 6/17/06





SFR Duncan
Midnight Mink Tortishell Berkshire Dumbo Buck
© Deer Creek Rattery 6/17/06





SFR Duncan at nearly 8 months old in different lighting.





