

Forests for the Forest Dormouse: Building conservation guidelines with and for land managers

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Abstract

The Forest Dormouse (*Dryomys nitedula*) is native to a variety of Austrian forest landscapes, although recordings of the species are very rare. In a 3-year nationwide search we are trying to collect data on abundance, habitat preferences, and response to forest management practices. Nest box occupancy is recorded at 20 study sites. In an extensive citizen science initiative, we are also looking at data from footprint tunnels, camera traps and casualties from cat predation. Additionally, audio detectors (AudioMoths) are tested against other methods as a new monitoring approach.

First year results indicate a surprising accumulation of Forest Dormice near or in anthropogenically shaped areas, such as settlements and pastures. Distribution of the species in Austria seems to be much more concentrated on some alpine areas than previously thought.

The study results, together with data on land management, will form the basis for management guidelines which will be developed together with foresters and county administrations.

Keywords

Dryomys nitedula, forest management, monitoring, guidelines

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