

Status and distribution of dormice (Mammalia, Gliridae) in Bulgaria

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Abstract

Here we summarize all available data about dormice (Gliridae) in Bulgaria, published one and our own observations, collected in the last 20 years. Four species are found in Bulgaria - the Forest Dormouse (*Dryomys nitedula*), the Edible Dormouse (*Glis glis*), the Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) and the Roach's Mouse-tailed Dormouse (*Myomimus roachi*). Altogether we collected 1200 records from 283 locations. A database has been created in which every single record is kept. The most common and widespread species are the Edible (*G. glis*) and Forest Dormouse (*D. nitedula*), found in 212 and 139 locations respectively. They inhabit mainly the deciduous and mixed forest in the country. The Hazel Dormouse (*M. avellanarius*) is found in 77 locations, the bulk of them are in the mountains, but there are some locations along the Danube and southeast Bulgaria. It prefers woods with a well-developed understorey. The Roach's mouse-tailed dormouse (*M. roachi*) is the rarest one - found in 26 locations in southeast Bulgaria. In contrast to the other dormice, it avoids woods and lives in semi-open habitats with shrubs, tree lines, and islands in grasslands and agricultural fields. There are several anecdotal reports of the Garden Dormouse (*Eliomys quercinus*) but no hard proof exists for the presence of this species. We discussed the patterns of distribution, conservation status, and coexistence of Bulgarian dormice.

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Conflicts of interest