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SOME NOTES ON THE EDIBLE DORMOUSE (*GLIS GLIS* L.) IN POLAND
NIECO O POPIELICY (*GLIS GLIS* L.) W POLSCE

The edible dormouse is very little known in Poland. I was only able to find 19 specimens in the collections of all the zoological institutes in Poland.

Tyzenhaus (1844) is the first in Polish literature to record the occurrence of the edible dormouse in Lithuania and Kurland. This information is confirmed by Belke (1848). Plater (1852) wrote that the edible dormouse occurs in the Podole regions, and both Kuntze and Szynal (1933) caught it there (environs of Dubno). We hear of the edible dormouse occurring in mountainous regions in the Tatra Mountains (Kocyan 1867; Nowicki, 1867); near Rytro (Lubicz - Niezabitowski, 1903); in the Pieniny Mts. (Sitowski, 1923); Bieszczady Mts. (Grodziński, 1957); Świętokrzyskie Mountains (Sokołowski, 1947).

The occurrence of the edible dormouse was also confirmed in the Rzeszów district (Schaiter, 1868); in the Sandomierz Forest area (Jachno, 1868); near Kraków (Kowalski, 1951); in the Warsaw district (Wałęcki, 1881) and in the Białowieża Forest (Karpiński, 1954).

As will be seen from the above short review, the edible dormouse occurs throughout almost the entire area of Poland (with the exception of West Pomerania). The distribution of this species in Poland is given by Lubicz-Niezabitowski (1933) Skuratowicz, (1947) and Van den Brink (1956) who includes a map showing the occurrence of the edible dormouse in Europe.

Of the countries neighbouring Poland, the edible dormouse occurs in Germany (Mohr, 1950; Zimmermann, 1955), in Czechoslovakia (Rosicky and Kratochvil, 1955); in the Soviet Union Ogniev (1947) and Sierżanin (1955).

The majority of authors, however, emphasise the great rarity of this rodent. Causes contributing to this state of affairs may be:

a) occurrence in small numbers only of this species on account of its proximity to the northern limits of its range (in Poland the edible dormouse, like the forest dormouse and the garden dormouse, reaches the northern limit of occurrence of these species in Europe). The spread and settlement

of the edible dormouse in a northerly direction is unquestionably influenced by climatic factors, an example of which is the settlement of this species in England, into which it was artificially introduced (Thompson, 1953) until, reaching a certain limit, it spreads no further to the north.

Evidence of the large numbers in which the edible dormouse can occur is provided by Thiem's data (1940), who found that 20.6% of the bird-boxes had been occupied by these dormice.

b) the fact that no large-scale collections of mammals are made throughout Poland.

c) method of collection not suitable for the edible dormouse. Collections of mammals are made either by means of Zimmer cylinders, or various kinds of snap and live traps. It is however, well known that one of the most effective ways of catching edible dormice is to search bird-boxes.

The material compared in this work was obtained as follows: Kraków district — 8 specimens; Białowieża — 4 specimens; the Carpathians — 5 specimens; Polesie region, (B.S.S.R.) — 2 specimens. For purposes of comparison I have included measurements of skulls of this species borrowed from the Zoological Museum in Vienna, belonging to the sub-species *Glis glis glis* L.

The material collected in this work may serve as a basis for further research work on this interesting and little-known representative of our fauna.

Table 1.

Body measurements of *Glis glis* L. in Poland.

no.	corp us	cauda	pes	auris
7	120 - 160	105 - 126	26 - 29	13,5 - 18,0

I made craniometric measurements in accordance with generally accepted principles (Sidorowicz, 1958).

It is to be regretted that only certain of the species were provided with labels giving their body measurements, which I have included as informative data only (Table 1).

I have included the range of variation of each dimension in the tables. The use of averages would be pointless and would not yield the required results, since there are only 2 old specimens in the comparative material, the remainder all being young. This should also be borne in mind in comparing the material described with dimensions of skulls of edible dormice given in Table 2, taken from the works by Miller (1912) and Ogniev (1947). The data given by these authors refer to the subspecies *Glis glis glis* L. which according to its distribution should occur in Poland.

The majority of the craniometric measurements of Polish representatives of the species *Glis glis* L. are within the limits of variation given by Miller and Ogniew for the subspecies *Glis glis glis* L. In any case this is completely applicable to the two undoubtedly adult specimens.

Table 2.
Cranial measurements of *Glis glis* L.

	Poland		Miller,	Ogniew,	Austria
	young	adults	1912	1947	
Condylbasal length	31,6-33,9	34,9-36,9	35,0-38,8	33,8-37,0	32,7-35,1
Zygomatic breadth	18,9-21,3	22,0-23,6	22,2-25,0	21,5-23,6	20,2-23,4
Interorbital constriction	4,5-5,2	4,8-5,0	4,8-5,2	5,0-5,6	4,7-5,2
Diastema	7,9-9,2	9,3-10,1	9,2-10,6	7,0-9,5	8,3-10,2
Basal length	29,0-32,2	32,1-34,3		29,3-32,6	29,9-32,8
Palatal height	7,0-8,3	8,4-8,8			7,6-8,2
Occipital breadth	14,1-16,8	16,2-16,7			16,1-17,4
Height of skull per bullae	12,2-14,5	14,6-14,7			12,9-14,2
Brain case height	9,8-10,5	10,4-10,4			10,5-10,9
Upper molars	6,2-7,0	6,2-6,5	6,6-7,0	6,1-6,8	6,3-7,4
Lower molars	6,4-7,7	6,9-7,1	6,6-7,4		7,1-7,8
Number of individuals	15	2	23	16	6

The edible dormouse is sporadically encountered in Białowieża. Only 4 edible dormice were captured of a total of approximately 35,000 mammals caught here over a period of 12 years. Inspection of bat- and bird boxes distributed over the entire area of the Białowieża National Park did not even once reveal their occupation by dormice. This might possibly be caused by the opening of the box being too small, but this is not very probable, since the forest dormice, which are only slightly smaller, enter the boxes without difficulty.

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CZARNA WIEWIÓRKA (*SCIURUS VULGARIS FUSCOATER* ALTUM)
W BIAŁOWIEŻY

DARK PHASE OF THE SQUIRREL (*SCIURUS VULGARIS FUSCOATER*
ALTUM) IN BIAŁOWIEŻA

W Polsce czarną fazę podgatunku *Sciurus vulgaris fuscoater* Altum spotykamy na podgórzu i w górach, gdzie forma ta występuje w dużej przewadze nad rudą (Zawidzka, 1958). Dotychczas w Puszczy Białowieskiej nie spotkano czarnych wiewiórek. Dopiero w zimie 1958/59 po raz pierwszy widziałem tam czarną wiewiórkę. Udało mi się ją dn. 20.03.59 zastrzelić. Wymiary zabitego okazu (♀ Nr. coll. 20906) były następujące: corpus — 225 mm, cauda — 184 mm, pes — 60 mm, auris — 32 mm, pondus — 387 g.

Ubarwienie okazu było następujące: grzbiet — czarno-brunatny (sepiaecus), boki brunatne (bruneus), ogon czarny (niger), brzuch biały (albus). Na wewnętrznej stronie łap nieco brązowego futra (nicotianus). Oznaczenie barw według skali Bondarceva (1954).

Fakt zabicia czarnej wiewiórki na nizinach świadczy, że zgodnie z poprzednimi danymi autora (1958) nie jest to żadna osobna forma systematyczna, jak to dawniej podawano, lecz najprawdopodobniej mutacja, która w terenach górskich występuje częściej, zaś na nizinach spotykana jest tylko sporadycznie.

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ZAKŁAD BADANIA SSAKÓW POLSKIEJ AKADEMII NAUK W BIAŁOWIEŻY.