

SUMMARY

Occurrence of an European hamster *Cricetus cricetus* in region of the Częstochowa Upland

As early as in the 1970s a hamster dwelled in a large area of Poland except the north, west and mountainous areas in the south. A current research proves a gradual extinction of the species from its natural habitat. Nowadays it lives mainly in Lubelszczyzna and Kielecczyzna.

In this article, the current position of the hamster in the Częstochowa Upland (southern Poland) has been presented. Hamster lived in a relatively large group up until 1980 on the Częstochowa Upland and its nearest neighbourhood. Later on its fast extinction was noticeable. Between 2002 and 2005, the species was noticed in 9 places. In 2005 it remained only in 2 (3) of them. However, only in one place its population is quite big. If a current rate of extinction of the hamster stays the same, it will disappear from the Upland within few years. The places in which the hamster lives are isolated from its main population and mark the western border of its presence in Poland.