

Population status and distribution of the wildcat *Felis silvestris* (Felidae, Carnivora), in Transcarpathia (Ukraine)

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Abstract

Distribution and abundance of the wildcat, *Felis silvestris*, in the Transcarpathian region were assessed. This region has the largest population of wildcats in the Ukraine estimated to be between 260-450 individuals (about 0.2-0,35 inds./1000 ha), representing two-thirds of the total Ukrainian population. The major threats to the wildcat population in the region are assessed and measures to conserve the species are recommended. The organization of a bilateral nature protection territory (Ukraine and Slovakia) along the Latorytsia river is proposed to afford more effective protection of the species population. We underline the importance of carrying out scientific research on wildcat populations, especially genetic investigation to ascertain the degree of hybridisation with feral cats.

Key words

Felis silvestris, population size, threats, conservation, Ukraine.