

4. STATUS OF THE LYNX IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

In the following pages, we will treat briefly the European countries with an existing or potential lynx population, in alphabetic order of their abbreviations (see tab.1). We use information and recommendations from our respondents. The "comment" represents our interpretation and opinion. Fig.1 shows the recent distribution of the lynx in Europe according to our contacts. There are some contradictions between neighbouring countries, but we did not try to adjust them.

AL - Albania

Status: Unknown; probable autochthonous population.

Comment: No data available. Miric (1974) and Matjusckin (1979) mention the lynx as present along the Yugoslav-Albanian border, Festetics (1980b) and Cop (1988) include the eastern part of Albania in their map of the distribution of the lynx on the Balkan Peninsula. Bojovic (1978) supposes for Albania the same abundance as for Yugoslavia, but concedes that the lynx in Albania is intensively hunted. Kratochvil (1968h) draws a much more restrictive distribution map for Albania, and he admits that there are no data. On an Albanian map of 1982 on the distribution of game species, submitted by E. Nowak, the lynx is indicated in five places in the NE and in one place in S. Albania. The only concrete information (Miric 1974) is dated 1896 and 1912! The recent distribution of the species in Yugoslavia suggests that it might still exist in Albania too, and Albania could be very important for the conservation of the Balkan lynx population (see Yugoslavia).

AT - Austria

Respondents: H. Gossow, W. Kulterer, H. Pechlaner

Status: Eradicated; re-introduced and re-migrating with increasing tendency.

Former presence and recent distribution: Eiberle (1972), Polacsek (1978) and Festetics (1980b) sum up the history of the eradication of the lynx in Austria. The autochthonous population became extinct in all parts of Austria during the 19th century. Polacsek (1978) presents a list of observations in the 20th century. Some of these observations cannot be proved, others may concern animals which had escaped from zoos, and in the NE of the country individuals may have immigrated from Czechoslovakia (Festetics 1980b).

In 1976, the lynx was re-introduced in Austria. This project has been described by Festetics et al. (1980a), Von Berg et al. (1980) and Sommerlatte et al. (1980). Nine lynx (six males, three females) were released in the Styria district (Steiermark, star in fig.2) and followed by radio-telemetry and tracking in the snow. After years of little evidence, there were increasing observations in Carinthia (Kärnten). Today, there is a stable or slightly increasing population in Carinthia, and there have been scattered observations in other districts (H. Gossow, see fig.2b).