

Legal situation, hunting: Considered as a game species, but protected throughout the year in the whole of Austria.

Damage to livestock: In the first years after re-introduction there were no considerable losses of domestic animals. Only in recent years has there been moderate damage in Carinthia. W. Kulterer submitted the following data: 1987: 27 domestic sheep; 1988: four sheep; 1989 (till end of September): 52 sheep, one goat and one calf. Compensation is paid by an insurance ("Bundesländerversicherung") provided by the Carinthian hunters association. The price of a sheep is 1,200 - 2,500 ÖS (W. Kulterer).

Recommendations: The respondents emphasise, that both public education and more research on the lynx is needed.

Comments: The first lynx of the Slovenian re-introduced population have probably reached Austria and increased the existing population in Carinthia district (H. Gossow, see also Yugoslavia and Italy). This may be one reason for the rapid development of recent years. On the other hand, it is quite characteristic for problems of damage to livestock to turn up a few years after the re-introduction (see Switzerland and France). Whereas in the early years predation on ungulates by the lynx provoked controversy with hunters (Gossow & Honsig-Erlenburg 1986), now a dispute with the sheepbreeders has arisen. Problems may even increase in coming years. Gossow (1989) illustrates exemplarily the psychological and public relation challenges of (or rather after) a re-introduction of a large predator. We will focus on that in the chapter "Re-introduction".

BG - Bulgaria

Respondents: G. Spiridonov, N. Spassov

Status: Eradicated.

Former presence and extinction: The traditional area still occupied in the 20th century was: 1. the Balkan Mountains E of Sofia and the Rhodope Mountains SE of Sofia; 2. the NW Balkan Mountains S of Vidin; and 3. the northern part of the Istranca Mountains along the border to Turkey south of Burgas. The last known observation was in 1941. Since then, there have been unsubstantiated rumours of individuals immigrating from neighbouring countries. As reasons for the eradication, G. Spiridonov suggests overhunting, conflicts with farmers and sheepbreeders and loss of nutrition due to the reduction or eradication of ungulate populations.

Legal situation: Protected by law throughout the year since 1986. The species was given protection at the suggestion of G. Spiridonov, when the possibility of spontaneous remigration became probable.

Comments: Evidence for the prehistoric and historic distribution of the lynx in Bulgaria and for its eradication is given by Atanasov (1968). In recent years, several authors erroneously mentioned the species as still present in this country (Festetics 1980b). The only neighbour of Bulgaria with a considerable autochthonous lynx population is Yugoslavia. The range of this population is quite small, and it is doubtful whether it will spread out in the near future. G. Spiridonov and N. Spassov have already suggested the re-introduction of the lynx in Bulgaria.