

New findings of the Northern Bat (*Eptesicus nilssonii*) in Romania

Nové nálezy netopýra severního (*Eptesicus nilssonii*) v Rumunsku

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Abstract. New records of the northern bat (*Eptesicus nilssonii*) from two sites on the Padiș Plateau in the Apuseni Mts (NW Romania) are reported. These findings give the first evidence of the species' presence in a large area between the Ukrainian parts of the Carpathians and the south-westernmost piedmont of the Southern Carpathians where the only three Romanian records of the northern bat had been made.

The northern bat, *Eptesicus nilssonii* (Keyserling et Blasius, 1839), is a north Palaearctic species distributed from France through most of northern and central Europe and Asia to Japan (HORÁČEK et al. 2000). While the species distribution in Europe is mostly continual in its northern and central parts, its southern limits reach as far southward as northern Italy and Bulgaria, although southern populations seem to be very patchy and restricted to high elevations (summarized by BENDA et al. 2003). In the Carpathians, the northern bat occurs from the Czech Republic through Slovakia to northern Ukraine (ANDĚRA & HANÁK 2007, POKYNCHEREDA et al. 1999, UHRIN 2003). Concerning the Romanian part of the Carpathians, only very few records have been available and, moreover, all findings come from middle elevations of the Banat Mts. and Pietra Arsa, i.e. from the south-western edge of the Carpathian range (GHEORGHIU et al. 2001, RAUSCHERT 1963). So far, the species has surprisingly not been recorded in a huge area of montane habitats in the Southern Carpathians, in the Romanian part of the Eastern Carpathians and in the Apuseni Mts, where its presence can be considered likely.

During a field trip to the Apuseni Mts in the year 2000, we recorded *E. nilssonii* at two sites:

(1) Padiș cave (approx. 46° 36' N, 22° 42' E, 1250 m a. s. l.). This cave is situated in the Padiș Plateau, which is an upland karstic plateau covered with a mosaic of large pastures and patches of montane spruce climax forests that are located mostly on the tops of low hills scattered over the relatively flat area of the Plateau. The cave is situated at the edge of one of these forest patches. It is a relatively small descendent cave with a spacious dome behind its entrance, however, long systems of more or less vertical galleries are found in its deeper parts. On 14 October 2000, we captured two subadult males of *E. nilssonii* using a mist net installed at the cave entrance. Both individuals were captured from outside, entering the cave. Besides that, we caught 39 brown long-eared bats, *Plecotus auritus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (38 males, 1 female). All bats were released after identification. Pictures of one northern bat were taken.

(2) Focul Viu Ice Cave (approx. 46° 27' N, 22° 68' E, 1160 m a. s. l.) is a small (107 m long), descendent cave situated on the slopes of the Padiș Plateau in the upper part of a limestone ridge (ORGHIDAN et al. 1984). It is a mountain cave covered with ice in its deeper parts all year round. On 15 October 2000, we observed one torpid individual of the northern bat on a wall in the glaciated part of the cave. Also, one active brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) was observed in the cave.

Our records of *E. nilssonii* from the Apuseni Mts. give the first evidence of the species' presence in a large area between the Ukrainian parts of the Carpathians and the south-westernmost piedmont of the Southern Carpathians where the only three Romanian records of the northern bat had been made (GHEORGHIU et al. 2001). Based on these findings, I suggest that the species might occur in most other mountain areas of Romania, where a wide range of suitable habitats is available.

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SOUHRN

Práce uvádí dva nové nálezy netopýra severního (*Eptesicus nilssonii*) z října 2000 z oblasti horské krasové plošiny Padiş v masivu Západních hor (Apuseni). V jednom případě byli odchyceni dva jedinci ve vchodu do jeskyně (Peştera Padiş), ve druhém nalezen hibernující jedinec v ledové jeskyni Focul Viu. Tyto dva nálezy představují první potvrzení výskytu *E. nilssonii* v rozsáhlé oblasti Karpat mezi Ukrajinou na severovýchodě a Banátem na jihozápadě, odkud nebyl dosud výskyt tohoto druhu doložen.

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