

an ACTH (adrenocorticotrophic hormone) challenge test. Long-term analyses under adapted husbandry conditions are currently underway.

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Spatial niche segregation between pine and stone martens

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Coexistence of two ecologically similar species is possible only when their niche is at least partly segregated in space or time. Pine marten (*Martes martes*) and stone marten (*Martes foina*) are competitors which coexist in the same area. We investigated temporal and spatial niche segregation of these species by radiotracking 14 pine martens (8 females and 6 males) and 20 stone martens (9 females and 11 males) in Białowieża Primeval Forest (north-eastern Poland) between 1991 and 2012. Our results demonstrate spatial niche segregation between these carnivores. Pine marten preferred various forested habitats whereas stone marten inhabited anthropogenic habitats. There were no significant differences in diurnal activity of both species, however stone marten started their activity earlier and finished later than pine marten.

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Mafalda Costa*, Mafalda Basto, Michael W Bruford, Carlos Fernandes, Margarida Santos-Reis Ecology and genetics of two small-medium sized mustelids in Portugal

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The Portuguese carnivore community comprises 14 species and eight of them belong to the family Mustelidae, for some of which has been given little attention. Here we present a review regarding the current status, ecology, genetics and conservation threats of two small-medium sized mustelids in Portugal, the European polecat (*Mustela putorius*) and the stone marten (*Martes foina*). In Portugal, the polecat has a “data deficient” status but, although apparently widespread in the country, empirical evidence suggests a population decline. On the other hand, the stone marten is a “least concern” species with a confirmed widespread distribution, but recently suggested as vulnerable to habitat fragmentation. The majority of ecological studies and evidences for both species refer to the southern region, where polecats seem to be strongly associated with riparian habitats and specialised in the consumption of lagomorphs, while stone martens are habitat and food generalists but associated with native/naturalised forest habitats. Main threats to both species in the country are habitat fragmentation and occasional road-kills; whereas polecat is also threatened by habitat degradation due to agricultural intensification, decline of prey populations and direct persecution. Further research is urgently needed to accurately map the occurrence of those species and assess the current state of its populations; and also understand how habitat fragmentation is affecting stone martens’ gene flow and determine whether hybridisation between polecats and domestic ferrets can pose a threat to this species in the country, so that conservation and management actions for both species can be properly applied.

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The impact of a man-made habitat on the density and habitat use of American mink

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The American mink (*Neovison vison*) was first imported to Iceland in 1931 for fur farming. Soon it escaped and now occupies most of the Icelandic lowlands. It has had a negative effect on some native species and can cause havoc in eider colonies and thus influence down harvesting.

The impact of a new 1.7 km long causeway crossing the fjord Kolgrafafjörður in W-Iceland, on the local population density and land use of feral mink was estimated by radio tracking, following concerns raised by eider down farmers about a possible local increase in mink numbers due to the construction. Local mink numbers grew and habitat use changed after the construction of the causeway, which seemed to be an important feeding area to mink in the area.