

Institut für Faunistik · Silberne Bergstraße 24 · 69253 Heiligkreuzsteinach

Silberne Bergstraße 24
69253 Heiligkreuzsteinach
Fon 06220/9 22 200
Fax 06220/9 22 265
Mobil 0 160 44 55 906
weinhold@institut-faunistik.net

Job description

Information on the survey of hamster burrows

Background information:

The European or Common hamster is a strictly protected species in Germany and also since 1992 under the Habitats Directive.

Persecution as a pest animal, habitat loss due to land use and industrial agriculture have caused hamster populations to decline nationwide.

Today, there are only a few relict populations left in Germany, some of which are very small and at high risk of extinction.

The last of four former hamster populations in Baden-Württemberg is located in the Rhine-Neckar region, the seventh largest conurbation in Germany.

Traffic route construction and the planning of new residential and commercial areas pose a constant threat to the remaining hamster populations, particularly in the Rhine-Neckar region.

Therefore a conservation program has been established in the year 2002. As part of the conservation program, the hamster populations are examined annually and their development recorded.

Method:

Hamsters are active at dusk and dawn, so the easiest way to record them is by searching for their burrows (Fig. 1).

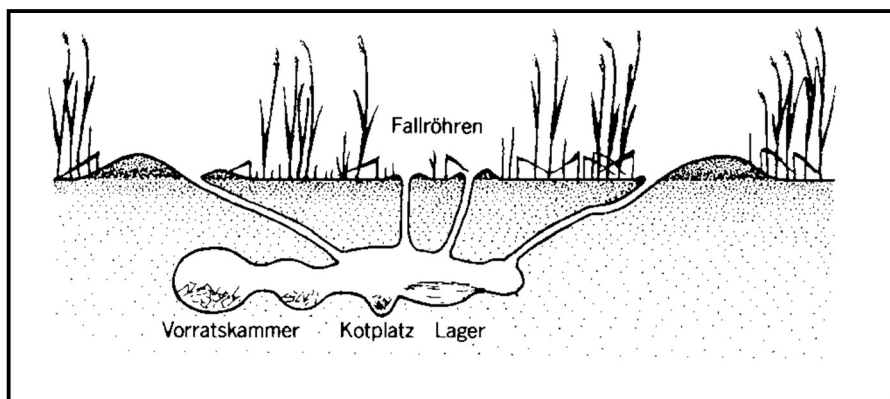


Fig. 1: Drawing of a typical hamster burrow in a grain field.

The work is carried out in teams of four to six people who walk across the fields in rows with a walking line distance of 2-3 m (Fig. 2). The coordinates of each hamster burrow are recorded with a GPS device and the characteristics of the burrow (number of tubes, type, age, etc.) as well as the crop and parcel number of the field are entered by hand in a recording sheet (Fig. 3).



Fig. 2: Hamster burrow search in a grain field in spring.



Fig. 3: Inclined burrow entrance (left) and vertical tunnel (right) of a hamster burrow



Fig. 4: With a body length of 20 - 25 cm, the Common hamster is about the size of a guinea pig.

Working hours:

From Monday to Friday, on site from 8 am - 12 noon and 1 pm - 5 pm. Half-day and daily work is possible with binding indication of times and days. Working hours and areas of operation are summarized in a work schedule and sent by the messenger "Signal/Hamstertrackers"" or alternatively Email. We work in (almost) any weather!

Training:

Each employee receives theoretical and practical training at the start of the survey.

Area of operation:

Each team is assigned an area of operation which it has to complete within a period of 2 - 3 weeks. The operational areas are spread across agricultural land in the Rhine-Neckar region and can generally only be reached by car. The teams often form car pools for this purpose but we also offer a shuttle service for up to 6 people.

Time period of survey:

As hibernators, hamsters do not wake up until the beginning of April and gradually resume their above-ground activity.

They can therefore generally be recorded from end of April/beginning of May (depending on the weather) until mid of May and then again after the grain harvest from July to the beginning of August.

Fitness:

A good basic physical constitution and condition are a prerequisite, as you are on your feet for 8 hours in almost any weather.

Clothing:

All-terrain clothing and appropriate footwear (e.g. hiking boots) as well as rain gear and rubber boots are absolutely essential.

Contact:

Name, address, email and telephone numbers are required for the drafting of the contract and the possibilities for consultation, also among the team members.

Payment/contract:

€ 15/hour net on a fee basis. Each employee receives a "freelancer contract" and is paid on reception of an invoice at the end of the assignment.

signed Dr. Ulrich Weinhold, Project management