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**Z. Barkasi**

National Museum of Natural History NAS Ukraine,  
B. Khmelnitsky Str., 15, Kyiv, 01601 Ukraine

## **MURID RODENTS (MURIFORMES, MURIDAE) FROM TRASCARPATHIA IN THE COLLECTIONS OF KYIV ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUMS**

In scientific collections of the National Museum of Natural History, NAS of Ukraine and the Zoological Museum of Kyiv Taras Shevchenko National University are preserved 482 samples, six species of Muridae rodents collected from 1940 to 1990. Specimens were collected in all altitudinal zones of the region. The article contains general characteristics of the collections and brief description of genera and species of murids according to the latest fauna surveys of the region. The taxonomic analysis of collections showed that in terms of species richness the genus *Sylvaemus* takes the first place and it is represented in the fauna of Transcarpathia by three species: *S. tauricus*, *S. sylvaticus* and *S. uralensis*. In accordance to the total number of known specimens from Transcarpathia in the collections *S. tauricus* is represented quite fully ( $n = 379$ ). The biogeographical analysis of the collections and data of literature sources allow to suggest that related species of wood mice are common throughout the region with a particular spatial differentiation: *S. tauricus* more abundant in piedmont and highland zones and *S. sylvaticus* on the lowland area.

Key words: museum collections, rodents, Muridae, Transcarpathia, Ukraine.

### **Introduction**

Zoological museum collections are important sources of information about not only the species composition and its changes within a certain geographic or administrative region, but also on distribution, morphometric and craniometric variability of different animal species, in particular mammals. In some cases, zoological collections allow to analyze the relative number of species as well (Загороднюк, Годлевська, 2001). The mouse-like rodents are not exception. In practice, collections are used not only by faunists, but also by taxonomists, because collections give opportunity to revise and improve the systematics of the groups of problematic species. In addition, collection materials give us information about the labor of the museum and zoologists that worked in it, which may be used to supplement the biography of those researchers and the museum's history (Годлевська, 2013).

Systematic and planned research of the Ukrainian Carpathians and adjacent areas' fauna started at the end of the 1940s. Data on the animal world of this region until that time were partial, fragmentary and mainly concerned with separate mountain ranges and some adjacent

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lowland areas. From the very beginning, special attention was paid to the studying of vertebrates of the region, including mouse-like rodents (Корчинский, 1988). The enrichment of zoological collections with specimens of species from this region has also begun.

During the last years, some fundamental research of the mammal fauna of Transcarpathia (Zakarpattia) and the Ukrainian Carpathians in general had been realized only within the protected areas. Data on the state of the lowland areas mammal fauna in are scarce and unstructured at all, and mainly they are mentioned as additional information in fauna checklists of the Ukrainian Carpathians. One of the latest checklists was published in the work “Theriofauna of the Carpathian Biosphere Reserve” (Загороднюк та ін., 1997), in which there are listed 78 mammal species for the region. Among them, there are 24 rodent species indicated for the territory of Transcarpathia. At the beginning of the 2000s, the reintroduction of the european beaver (*Castor fiber*) in the region had been observed and recorded its first settlements (Башта, Потіш, 2012), so the number of rodent species common in Transcarpathia grew to 25.

The presented work aims to give an overview of the taxonomic diversity of the Muridae family (Muriformes, seu Rodentia auct.) in the territory of Transcarpathia in the context of representativeness of this group in the collections of the National Museum of Natural History, NAS of Ukraine (NMNH) and the Zoological Museum of Kyiv Taras Shevchenko National University (ZMKNU).

## Material and methods

In this work we prefer to use the systematics and nomenclature accepted by the Ukrainian Theriological Society (e.g. Muriformes = Rodentia auct.). The research is based on the collections catalogue data of NMNH prepared by Shevchenko L.S. and Zolotukhyna S.I. (Шевченко, Золотухина, 2002), and also on the collections index of ZMKNU. All collection data were included into the author's database, that is part of a summarized catalogue of rodent collections of the Ukrainian Carpathians.

## General characteristics of the collections

The Zoological museum of NMNH is one of the leading natural history museums of Ukraine. The museum's establishment associated with the creation of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and its Faunistic Committee, which was registered on May 1, 1919. Initially, the museum stocks mainly consisted of private collections of its first employees. However, already in 1941 there were almost three thousands of skins and stuffed mammals. During the World War II, a significant part of the collections was taken abroad and many materials were affected because of lack of proper care. Since the late 1960s, the enrichment of scientific stock collection had been carried by annual expeditions of the staff (Смельянов та ін., 2012). Now there are 685 specimens of rodents in the collection of NMNH.

The Zoological Museum of Kyiv Taras Shevchenko National University is one of the oldest natural history museums of Ukraine. It was established in 1805 as a zoological class of the Volyn High School of Science. On its basis was created the zoological museum of University of Kyiv (Зоологічний музей, 2013). Now there are more than 7800 specimens of mammals in the museum stocks, among them 250 specimens of rodents from the territory of Transcarpathia.

Thus, the total number of rodent specimens from Transcarpathia in the investigated collections is 948, 482 of which are the specimens of six species of the family Muridae (tab. 1).

Collection materials were accumulated during almost a half-century — from 1940 till 1990 (fig. 1). Most of the specimens were collected immediately after the World

Table 1. The number of specimens of different species of the family Muridae in the collections of NMNH and ZMKNU.

Species*	Specimens in NMNH	Specimens in ZMKNU	Total
<i>Micromys minutus</i> (Pallas, 1771)	–	–	0
<i>Apodemus agrarius</i> (Pallas, 1771)	37	6	43
<i>Sylvaemus tauricus</i> (Pallas, 1811)	310	69	379
<i>Sylvaemus sylvaticus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	20	1	21
<i>Sylvaemus uralensis</i> (Pallas, 1811)	11	–	11
<i>Mus musculus</i> Linnaeus, 1758	22	2	24
<i>Mus spicilegus</i> Petenyi, 1882	–	–	0
<i>Rattus norvegicus</i> (Berkenhout, 1769)	2	2	4
Total:	<b>402</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>482</b>

\* Common in the region, according to the fauna checklist of 1997 (Загороднюк та ін., 1997).

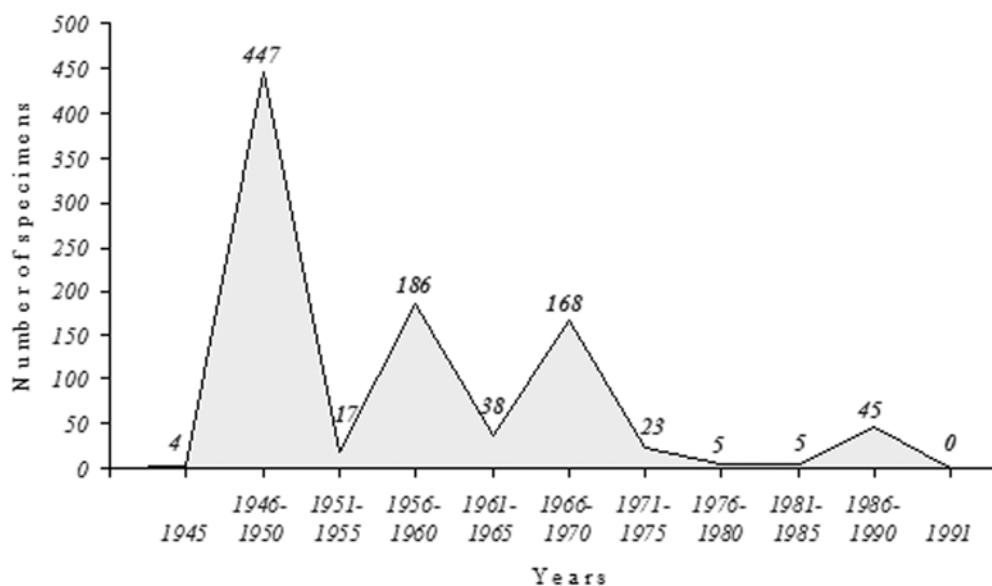


Fig. 1. The dynamics of Muridae specimens collection in the considered museums.

War II, in 1946–1950. Before that, Ukrainian scientists had not had much information on the fauna (as well as on the flora) of Transcarpathia, which explains the intense studying of the region in the postwar period. The second, “less productive” peak of investigations was observed in the period from 1956 until 1965. Since 1966, the number of collected specimens is insignificant, and there are no collected specimens since 1991 at all.

It is important to mention those specialists and research fellows of the museums, which labor had a major influence not only on studying the fauna of the Ukrainian Carpathians and Transcarpathia in particular, but also on significant enrichment of scientific collections. Among them there are such outstanding figures as I.T. Sokur, V.I. Abelentsev, I.V. Rogatko, Ye.G. Reshetnyk, G.V. Selezhynskyi, O.S. Tiahunov, N.A. Збірник праць Зоологічного музею, 2014, № 45

Table 2. The number of specimens collected in different months.

Species	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	Total
<i>Micromys minutus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Apodemus agrarius</i>	-	-	-	-	8	6	10	2	15	2	-	-	43
<i>Sylvaemus tauricus</i>	-	-	-	25	134	50	52	18	96	3	1	-	379
<i>Sylvaemus sylvaticus</i>	-	-	-	-	8	1	9	1	2	-	-	-	21
<i>Sylvaemus uralensis</i>	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	11
<i>Mus musculus</i>	-	-	-	-	14	3	2	-	1	4	-	-	24
<i>Mus spicilegus</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	4
Total specimens, n	0	0	0	25	173	60	73	22	119	9	1	0	482
Total species, S	0	0	0	1	6	4	4	4	6	3	1	0	6

Note. The warm period of year is highlighted in grey.

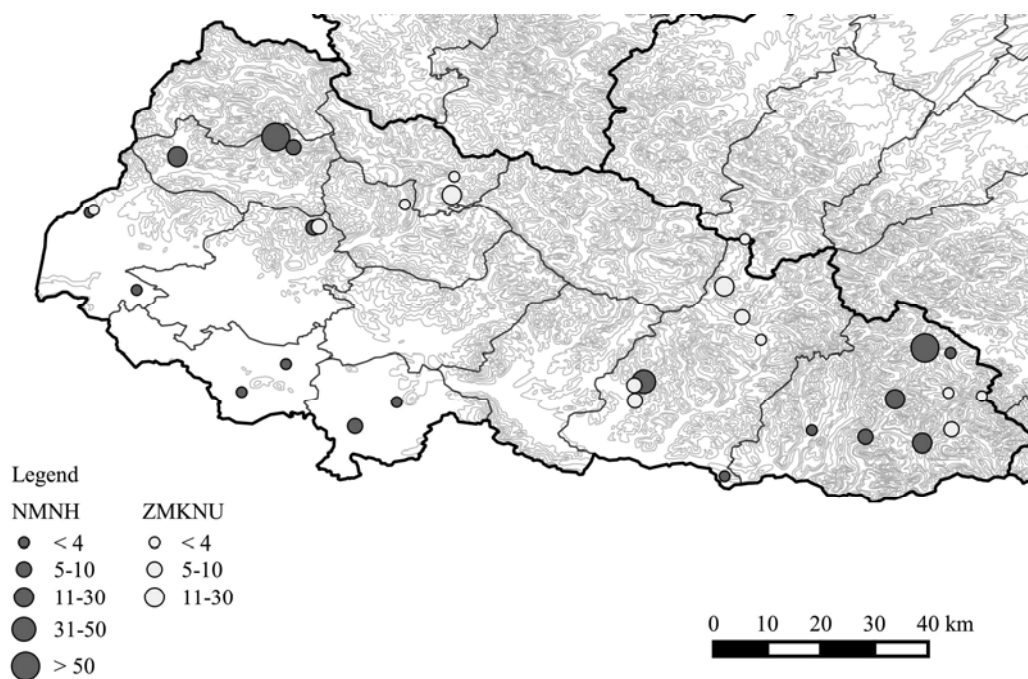


Fig. 2. Collecting points of the samples.

Polushina, L.M. Pisarieva, K.A. Tatarinov, Yu.Y. Paschenko, Zh.V. Rozora and others.

The analysis of the specimens' amount collected in different months shows that their collection was performed from April to November (tab. 2). The most of samples and species were collected in the first and last warm month of the year, namely in May and September. During these two months, 60.6% of all specimens of the six species were collected. To compare: in other warm months researchers collected 32.2% of all specimens and in the other seven months of the year only 7.2%.

As for the analysis of the spatial distribution of collecting points in the region, they cover all geographical zones, such as the lowland, piedmont and highland areas (fig. 2). The specimens of murids are represented from nine administrative districts (of

13 districts). The highest concentration of the collecting points is observed in mountain ranges of the Rakhiv and Tiachiv districts. Specimens from four administrative districts of the region (Velykyi Bereznyi, Mizhhiria, Khust, and Irshava districts) are absent. However, the collection materials of the two investigated museums informatively complement one another, so they sufficiently reflect the geographical and, in particular, the altitudinal distribution of the species and cover the most landscape types.

### Review of genera, species and samples

The review of the species is based on the two latest rodent fauna checklists of the Ukrainian Carpathians, prepared by Korchynsky, O.V. in 1988 and Zagorodniuk, I.V. with co-authors in 1997 (Корчинский, 1988; Загороднюк та ін., 1997), and also on information contained in the work “Mammals of the Transcarpathian Region (Ukraine)” (Башта, Потіш, 2007). The taxonomy and nomenclature used in this paper is the accepted by the Theriological Society of Ukraine.

The *Micromys* genus is represented in the fauna of Transcarpathia by one species — *Micromys minutus* (Pallas, 1771) (harvest mouse, мишка лучна). This rare species wasn't revealed in the mountains (Загороднюк та ін., 1997) and it prefers wet lowland meadows with high grass. Sometimes it encounters on treated fields (Корчинский, 1988). There are no specimens of this species from the region in the collections of NMNH and ZMKNU.

Also the *Apodemus* genus is represented in the region's rodent fauna by one species — *Apodemus agarius* (Pallas, 1771) (striped field mouse, миша польова). It is a typical lowland-piedmont species, which is common on covered by shrubs areas and agricultural lands but avoids dense woodlands (Башта, Потіш, 2007). This species also was revealed on subalpine meadows of the Borzhava polonina (Корчинский, 1988; Загороднюк та ін., 1997). “Polonina” is a local name for a segment of the upper belt of the Carpathians and various mountain ranges on the Balkan Peninsula that has a moderately hilly surface with a flat top and is covered by mountain meadows. A polonina is usually used as a summer mountain pasture (<http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Polonina>). From Transcarpathia there are 43 specimens of this species, 37 of them are preserved in stocks of NMNH and six in ZMKNU. The specimens were collected on the territory of six administrative districts: Perechyn dist. (n = 13), Tiachiv dist. (n = 3), Mukachevo dist. (n = 2), Rakhiv dist. (n = 1), Volovets dist. (n = 1) and Svaliava dist. (n = 1). It should be noticed that for a relatively significant number of specimens (n = 22) the actual place of collecting is unknown.

The *Sylvaemus* genus is represented in the fauna of Transcarpathia by three species — *Sylvaemus tauricus* (Pallas, 1811) (syn. *Apodemus flavicollis*, yellow-necked wood mouse, мишак жовтогрудий), *Sylvaemus sylvaticus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (syn. *Apodemus sylvaticus*, wood mouse, мишак лісовий) and *Sylvaemus uralensis* (Pallas, 1811) (syn. *Apodemus microps*, ругту or Ural wood mouse, мишак уральський, або малий).

The yellow-necked wood mouse (*S. tauricus*) is the most typical for the piedmont and highland zones. This species has the largest number in beech forests but in coniferous and mixed forests the bank vole *Myodes glareolus* predominates (Полушина, 1965). The yellow-necked wood mouse has the largest number (n = 379) of specimens among the other murid species in the analyzed collections: 301 examples preserved in NMNH and 69 in ZMKNU. The exact collecting locality of 88 specimens is unknown. The other samples were collected within nine districts that represent all altitudinal zones: Rakhiv dist. (n = 125), Tiachiv dist. (n = 69), Perechyn dist. (n = 57), Mukachevo dist. (n = 17), Volovets dist. (n = 14), Uzhhorod dist. (n = 3), Beregovo dist. (n = 2), Vynogradiv dist. (n = 2) and Svaliava dist. (n = 2). It is also should be noticed that in the collection of ZMKNU 20 specimens of *S. sylvaticus* were redefined as *S. tauricus*. This case proves again that species of the genus *Sylvaemus* morphologically are very close and their iden-

tification in field conditions is often unreliable. Therefore, accurate identification of these species is possible only with the help of craniometric parameters.

The wood mouse (*S. sylvaticus*) is abundant on the lowland and considered as a rare species in the mountains. This species is often confused with young individuals of the yellow-necked wood mouse, because morphologically they are very similar (Корчинский, 1988; Загороднюк, 1993а; Загороднюк та ін., 1997). In the investigated collections this species is represented by 21 specimens from the Perechyn (n = 8), Rakhiv (n = 5), Uzhhorod (n = 2), Beregovo (n = 1) and Vynohradiv (n = 1) districts. The exact collecting locality of three specimens is unknown.

Earlier *S. uralensis* was considered as the small form of *S. sylvaticus* and scientists had no consensus about its systematic position (Корчинский, 1988). As a separate species of the Ukrainian Carpathians, it was first mentioned in 1980 (Полушина, Вознюк, 1980). Nowadays, the pygmy wood mouse is a species with low abundance and it has two separate populations — lowland and subalpine (Загороднюк та ін., 1997). There are 11 examples of this species in the collection of NMNH, but they are absent in the collection of ZMKNU. The samples were collected mainly within lowland districts: Vynohradiv dist. (n = 3), Beregovo dist. (n = 1) and Uzhhorod dist. (n = 1). The exact collecting place of five specimens is unknown.

The *Mus* genus is represented by two species — *Mus musculus* Linnaeus, 1785 (house mouse, миша хатня) and *Mus spicilegus* Petenyi, 1882 (mound-building mouse, миша курганцева). In fact, the presence only of the house mouse is reliably confirmed in the fauna of Transcarpathia. This typical synanthropic species occurs near human settlements. However, in summertime it has temporary nature habitations quite far from villages, farms or other outbuildings (Корчинский, 1988; Загороднюк та ін., 1997). The total number of the specimens of this species in the investigated collections is 24, including 22 in NMNH and only 2 in ZMKNU. The exact place of collection of four specimens is unknown. The others were collected within five districts: Rakhiv dist. (n = 10), Tiachiv dist. (n = 4), Vynohradiv dist. (n = 4), Uzhhorod dist. (n = 1) and Beregovo dist. (n = 1).

The presence of *M. spicilegus* is a subject of discussion among zoologists during the few last years and it is not confirmed fully yet. This species was not mentioned in the rodent fauna checklist of the Ukrainian Carpathians published by Korchyński, O.V. (1988), although it is included into the latest checklist (Загороднюк та ін., 1997) because of the high probability of its appearance or residence on the lowland part of Transcarpathia. The reason for such assumption is the fact of existence of this species in Pannonia and on the Great Hungarian Plain (Загороднюк, 1996), and the Transcarpathian (or Tysa) Lowland geographically is the part of the latest one (Географічна..., 1990). In addition, the species distribution to the territory of Transcarpathia is not limited by any kinds of obvious biogeographical barriers (Загороднюк, Березовский, 1994). Nevertheless, Bashta & Potish stated that in 2005–2007 they had already found some colonies of the species in the Uzhhorod district (Башта, Потіш, 2007). At the same time, there are no specimens of this species from Transcarpathia in the collections of NMNH and ZMKNU, and we have no information on its presence in other nature history museums as well.

The *Rattus* genus according to the fauna checklist from 1988 (Корчинский, 1988) is represented in the region by two species — *R. rattus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (black rat, пацюк чорний) and *R. norvegicus* (Berkenhout, 1769) (common rat, пацюк мандрівний), although finds of *R. rattus* were not confirmed by factual materials (Загороднюк та ін., 1997). As it turned out later, the black rat is one of the rarest species in the mammal fauna of Ukraine and it has remained only in seaside forests of the Crimea and in Polissia. Consequently, the records of this species in other parts of Ukraine and in Transcarpathia in particular were based on observations of melanistic

forms of *R. norvegicus* (Загороднюк, 1993b). Thereunder, the species was excluded from the rodent fauna checklist of the Ukrainian Carpathians in 1997 (Загороднюк та ін., 1997). There are no specimens of this species in stocks neither NMNH nor ZMKNU. However, the probability of appearance or finds of *R. rattus* in the region in the future can not be rejected.

The common rat *R. norvegicus* is a typical rare in the wild synanthropic species (Загороднюк та ін., 1997). The small number of collected specimens of this species also confirms it: there are two examples in the collection of both NMNH and ZMKNU. The localities of their collection: Tiachiv dist. (n = 2), Rakhiv dist. (n = 1) and Vynohradiv dist. (n = 1).

### Results of the collection analysis

The total number of specimens of mouse-like rodents from Transcarpathia preserved in the collections of NMNH and ZMKNU is 938 examples, among them 482 (51%) are the samples of species of the family Muridae. The collection of NMNH is more informative and it contains 685 specimens of 21 rodent species. According to the collection catalogue, this number includes 402 (59%) samples of six species (29%) of murids. The collection of ZMKNU is smaller in amount, but significantly complements the collection of NMNH, especially on the information about the geographical distribution of species. According to the collection index, there are 253 samples of 14 rodent species in the collections of ZMKNU, including 80 (32%) specimens of five species (38%) of the family Muridae.

The taxonomic analysis of the collections showed that from Transcarpathia only four genera of the family Muridae are represented in the collections. Species of the genus *Micromys* are absent. Among the other genera, in terms of species richness the genus *Sylvaemus* takes the first place, which is represented in the fauna of Transcarpathia by three species: *S. tauricus*, *S. sylvaticus* and *S. uralensis*. The other genera are represented only by one species each, but the chance of finds of one more species for genera *Mus* and *Rattus* (*M. spicilegus* and *R. rattus*) is not declined though. In the investigated collections, only one species (*S. tauricus*) has a representative amount of specimens (n = 379).

The biogeographical analysis of the collections was carried out in the context of the species' distribution according to the altitude (lowland, piedmont and highland). We can suggest that the altitudinal zoning is probably not the main determining factor on the distribution of synanthropic species *M. musculus* and *R. norvegicus*. It might be confirmed by the presence of collecting points in all of the zones of the region. Perhaps, this is because the conditions of anthropogenic niches do not differ significantly in the lowland and the mountains.

According to the literature, related species of wood mice are common throughout the region with a certain spatial differentiation. The collection data of the investigated museums also confirm this statement: collecting points of *Sylvaemus tauricus* and *Sylvaemus sylvaticus* are located in all altitudinal zones. However, it is known from the literature that the yellow-necked wood mouse is much numerous in the piedmont and highland zones, and the wood mouse mostly in the lowland areas and also in some of the highland places. The pygmy wood mouse, as it was mentioned earlier, has two separate lowland and subalpine populations.

Most of the collecting points of *Apodemus agrarius* are located in the lowland and piedmont zones but single examples were found in the highland zone. In addition, published earlier sources suggest that the only part of the Ukrainian Carpathians where this species reaches the subalpine belt is the Borzhava polonina (Корчинский, 1988; Загороднюк та ін., 1997).

Thus, the research showed that both of the analyzed collections of rodents well represent the species composition and relative number of murids. The collections also allow to form samples for biogeographical analysis of distribution and in some species to study of their variability as well. In addition, the analysis showed that the collections were enriched not in a random manner and the collecting labors significantly linked with certain periods of year and certain groups of locations.

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Баркасі З.

МИШЕВІ ГРИЗУНИ (MURIFORMES, MURIDAE) ІЗ ЗАКАРПАТТЯ У КОЛЕКЦІЯХ  
ЗООЛОГІЧНИХ МУЗЕЇВ КИЄВА

У наукових фондах Національного науково-природничого музею НАН України та Зоологічного музею Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка зберігаються 482 зразки 6 видів гризунів родини Muridae, зібрані з 1940 до 1990 року. Зборами охоплено всі географічні зони регіону. В статті подано загальну характеристику досліджених колекцій, огляд родів і видів мишевих у світлі останніх списків родентофауни регіону. Таксономічний аналіз колекцій показав, що за показником видового багатства перше місце посідає рід лісових мишаків *Sylvaemus*, який представлений у фауні Закарпаття трьома видами — *Sylvaemus tauricus*, *S. sylvaticus* та *S. uralensis*. За загальною кількістю відомих зразків із Закарпаття у колекціях повноцінно представлений вид *Sylvaemus tauricus* (n = 379). Біогеографічний аналіз колекцій та літературних відомостей дозволяють зробити припущення, що близькі види мишаків поширені по всій території області з певною просторовою диференціацією: *S. tauricus* чисельніший у передгірному і гірському поясах, а *S. sylvaticus* — на рівнині.

Ключові слова: музейні колекції, гризуни, Muridae, Закарпаття, Україна.

Баркаси З.

МЫШИНЫЕ ГРЫЗУНЫ (MURIFORMES, MURIDAE) ИЗ ЗАКАРПАТТЯ В КОЛЛЕКЦИЯХ  
ЗООЛОГИЧЕСКИХ МУЗЕЕВ КИЕВА

В научных фондах Национального научно-природоведческого музея НАН Украины и Зоологического музея Киевского национального университета имени Тараса Шевченко хранятся 482 образца 6 видов грызунов семейства Muridae, собранных с 1940 по 1990 год. Сборами охвачены все географические зоны региона. В статье представлена общая характеристика исследованных коллекций, обзор родов и видов мышиных в свете последних списков родентофауны региона. Таксономический анализ коллекций показал, что по показателю видового богатства первое место занимает род лесных мышей *Sylvaemus*, который представлен в фауне Закарпаття тремя видами — *S. tauricus*, *S. sylvaticus* и *S. uralensis*. По общему количеству известных образцов из Закарпаття в коллекциях полноценно представлен вид *S. tauricus* (n = 379). Биогеографический анализ коллекций и литературных сведений позволяют предполагать, что близкие виды мышей распространены по всей территории области с определенной пространственной дифференциацией: *S. tauricus* более численный в предгорном и горном поясах, а *S. sylvaticus* — на равнине.

Ключевые слова: музейные коллекции, грызуны, Muridae, Закарпатье, Украина.

Contact:

Zoltan Barkasi,  
National Museum of Natural History NAS Ukraine,  
15 B. Khmelnytsky Str., Kyiv, 01601 Ukraine.  
E-mail: zlbarkasi@ukr.net

Контакт:

Золтан Баркасі,  
Національний науково-природничий музей НАН України,  
вул. Б. Хмельницького, 15, Київ, 01601 Україна.  
E-mail: zlbarkasi@ukr.net