

# PRELIMINARY CHECKLIST OF ALIEN MAMMAL SPECIES IN BULGARIA

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There are no accurate data on the non-native mammalian species collected in Bulgaria up to date. Reliable information about the current status of species bred in captivity, semi-captivity or in the wild is missing as well. The compilation of an accurate database is rather difficult in respect of the following subjects: the classification and taxonomy of the species, their paleohistory, determination of the various non-native species, etc.

There are not reliable data for the period before 1990, when many species of non-native mammals were introduced in Bulgaria, primarily for hunting and fur-farming, as precise information about the sites of placement, the origin and the number of the specimens, the success of the introduction, etc., is not available.

A review of the available data on the non-native mammal species in the scientific and popular literature was made. The main part of the non-native mammals consists of game species, such as *Dama dama*, *Bison bonasus*, *Capra ibex*, and *Ovis mussimon*. There are also reports about the introduction of the American mink (*Mustela vison*), the coypu (*Myocastor coypus*), the raccoon dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*), and the muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*). Two rat species, the black rat (*Rattus rattus*) and brown rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), penetrated into Bulgaria in ancient times. Among the alien mammal species, the brown rat had the highest negative impact on the natural ecosystems and humans. There were also reports about the negative impact of the coypu, muskrat and raccoon dog. Keeping exotic mammals as pets in Bulgaria has become popular in recent years. Some of those animals have been released accidentally in nature as in the case of the American grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*).

Latin name	English name	Status	Risk to the biodiversity, ecosystems, and human health
<b>RODENTIA</b>			
<b>Soricidae</b>			
<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>	Grey squirrel	occasional	Low risk
<i>Marmota marmota</i>	Alpine Marmot	extinct	-
<b>Muridae</b>			
<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	Brown rat	established	High risk
<i>Rattus rattus</i>	Black rat, Ship rat	established	High risk
<b>Arvicolidae</b>			
<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>	Muskrat	established	High risk. Expansion to South Bulgaria.
<b>Capromyidae</b>			
<i>Myocastor coypus</i>	Coypu	established	High risk
<b>Castoridae</b>			
<i>Castor fiber</i>	Eurasian beaver	extinct	-
<b>Lagomorpha</b>			
<b>Leporidae</b>			
<i>Lepus timidus</i>	Mountain hare	extinct	-
<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	Rabbit	established	Low risk
<b>CARNIVORA</b>			
<b>Mustelidae</b>			
<i>Mustela vison</i>	American mink	?	Medium risk. Two farms in the country. A new farm for 400 000 individuals planned.
<b>Canidae</b>			
<i>Nyctereutes procyonoides</i>	Raccoon dog	established	High risk. Expansion to South Bulgaria.
<b>ARTIODACTYLA</b>			
<b>Cervidae</b>			
<i>Dama Dama</i>	Fallow deer	established	No risk
<i>Cervus nippon</i>	Sika deer	extinct	-
<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	White-tailed Deer	extinct	-
<b>Bovidae</b>			
<i>Bison bison</i>	American bison	extinct	-
<i>Bison bonasus</i>	European bison	established	No risk
<i>Capra ibex</i>	Alpine ibex	?	No risk
<i>Ovis musimon</i>	Mouflon	established	No risk
<i>Ovis ammon</i>	The argali, or the mountain sheep	?	-
<i>Bos mutus</i>	Yak	established	-
<i>Alces alces</i>	Moose	extinct	-

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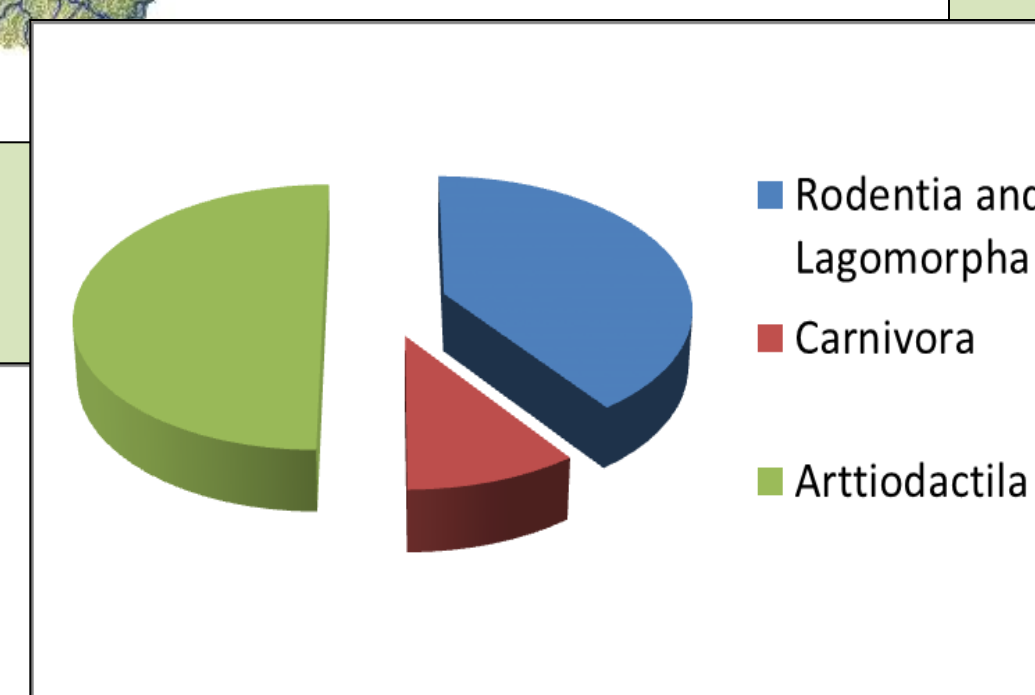
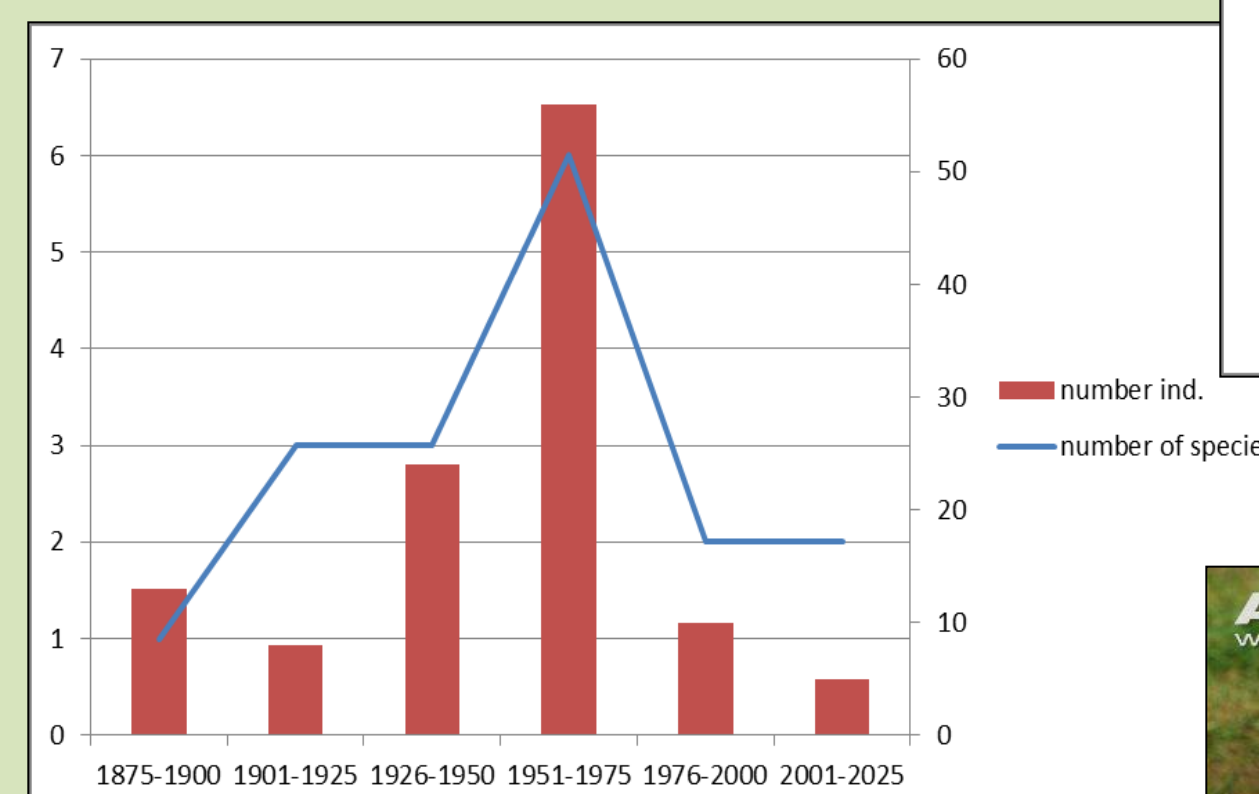
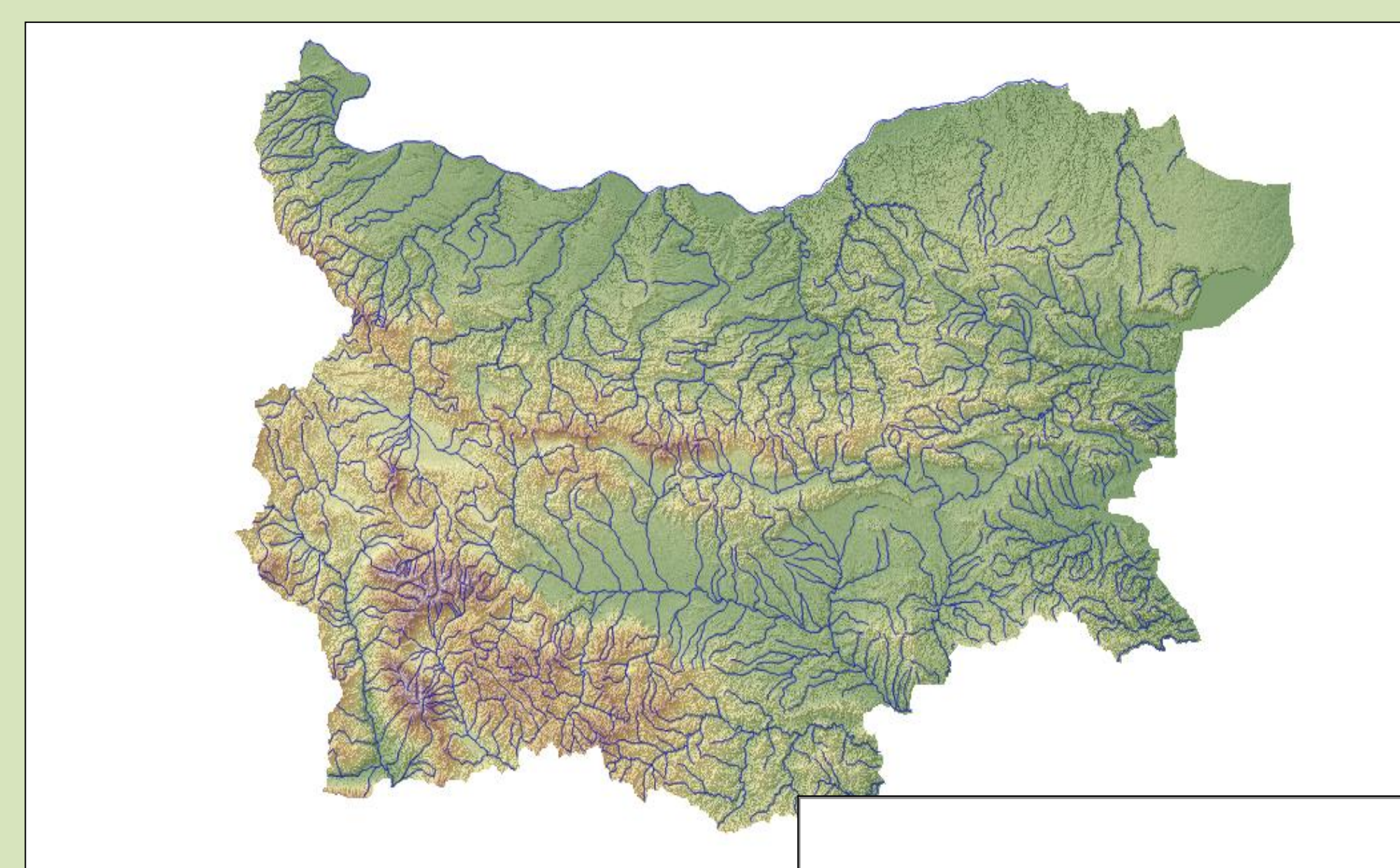
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