

Project Update: June 2016

- ***Procurement of equipment***

In project preparation period most of the field equipment that is necessary for field investigation was purchased. This includes the procurement of Sherman LFG traps (Large Folding Galvanized trap), GPS device and mountain equipment for researchers.

- ***Field investigations***

In this project period field investigations of Martinos Snow vole were conducted on two mountains: Trebević and Visočica. Trebević Mountain was done on 28th and 29th of May and on 4th and 5th of June 2016, while Visočica Mountain was done on 18th and 19th of June 2016. In total, 50 Sherman LFG traps were fragmentally set on rocky limestone ground, accumulations of rocks and boulders and similar habitats.

All traps were set above 1500 m.a.s.l. (meters above sea level), on average height of 1604 m.a.s.l.

In addition, the habitat of the species was also investigated and so far trapping was done on these habitats:

- Alpine and boreal heaths,
- Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands,
- Calcareous and calchist scree of the montane to alpine levels and
- Limestone pavements.

During the field investigation, attention has been given to cover as many different microhabitats close to the rocky parts in order to gain more knowledge about the ecology of species which is so far quite unknown. During trapping set of minimum 10 traps were set on different habitats in one area to cover as much different microhabitats of location as possible.

- ***Project difficulties***

During the procurement of Sherman LFG traps the customs procedures in Bosnia and Herzegovina were changed. These changes include the imports limit of materials for scientific research for the individuals which delayed the start of the project by the middle of May 2016.

- ***Plans for the next investigation period (July-October 2016)***

The plan for this period includes trapping on rest of the mountains in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to present the project and its results to the public (social networks, media etc.).

The plan for the social media include the founding of Facebook page “Small mammals of Bosnia and Herzegovina” which will have the purpose to animate the research in this field and also to present the project results to the public.

The rest of the listed equipment will be purchased in the next project period by the end of October 2016.

- ***Pictures***



Trapping on Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands on Trebević Mountain (28th and 29th of May 2016.). Traps were marked by pink marker.



Places where 2 individuals of Martinos Snow vole were caught (rock boulders) on Trebević (28th and 29th of May 2016.) – Position of the traps were marked with pink mark.



Martinis Snow vole feeding on local plants (Trebević 28th and 29th of May 2016.)



Setting the traps on Calcareous and calchist screes of the montane to alpine levels (Visočica 18th and 19th of June 2016)



Trapping area on Visočica Mountain included: alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands, calcareous and calchist screes of the montane to alpine levels and limestone pavements (Visočica 18th and 19th of June 2016)

- ***Other***

During the trapping on Trebević (trapping on 4th and 5th of June) at and Visočica (18th and 19th of June) Mountains no individuals were caught. This can be related to a fact that there was a rainy weather few days just before traps were set. Premature conclusions (thesis) show that the Martios Snow vole does not prefer to be active during the period of rainy days, and that is not active in damp areas of karst environment. In support of this thesis goes the fact that the species were trapped only during the dry days (two individuals caught on Trebević on 28th and 29th of May) and there were not trapped on second Trebević field visit (4th and 5th of June-the same trapping sites) and on Visočica Mountain trapping (18th and 19th). However, this thesis must be investigated during further project activities.