



Have you ever seen a garden dormouse?

If yes, let us know at www.gartenschlaefer.de

Every piece of information helps us keep track of the garden dormouse.

Join in!

Support us in our research work and help us protect the garden dormouse. You can find current join-in activities at www.gartenschlaefer.de.

If you have any questions about becoming more involved, send a mail to:

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Characteristics

Classification:	rodent from the dormouse family
Size:	around 15 cm body length + about 12 cm tail
Weight:	60-90g, up to more than 130g at start of winter
Offspring:	mostly one litter per year, four to six babies that are independent after about 40 days
Feeding:	omnivorous, mainly insects, worms, snails, eggs, fruits, seeds and buds
Behaviour:	nocturnal, extended hibernation

Annoying or worth protecting?

Sometimes the small dormouse with the “Zorro mask” is seen to be annoying, e.g. in gardens, vineyards or orchards. It likes to eat from berries and other fruits and can also be quite loud during the mating season. If there are enough openings to slip into, dormice also like to be in houses and eat any food stored there.

In regions where the garden dormouse can be found in areas populated by humans, it is hard to imagine that numbers are declining drastically almost everywhere. We are hearing increasing reports of people noticing that dormice have disappeared altogether.



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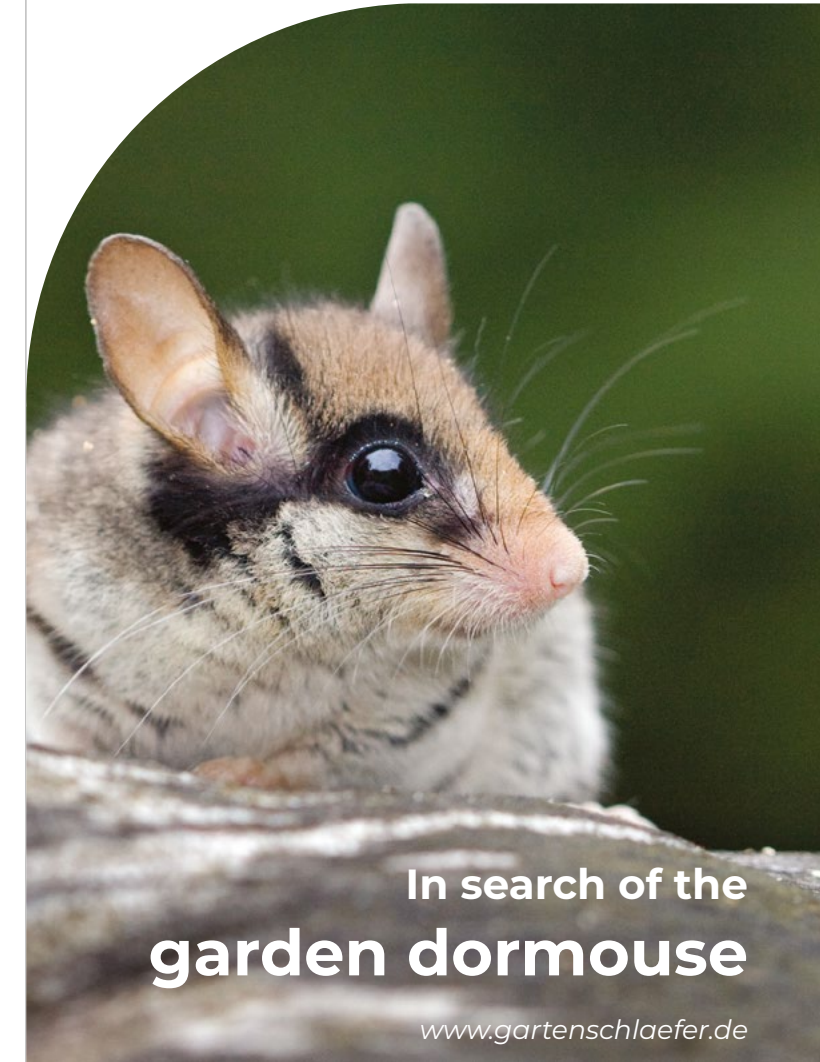
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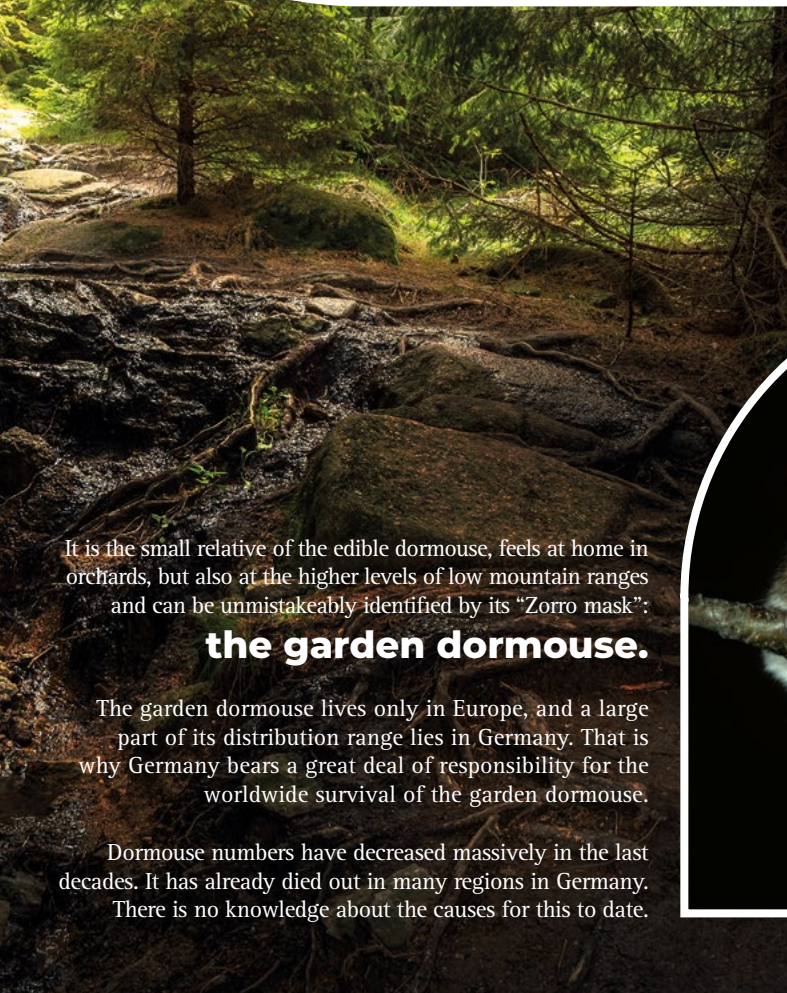


At home in flatlands and low mountain ranges

The garden dormouse can be found in very different habitats:

In some regions in Germany, as a synanthropic species, it can mainly be found in gardens, vineyards and orchards. The numbers there are sometimes pretty high. At the same time, dormice can also be found at higher locations in some low mountain ranges, e.g. the high-up spruce forests in the Harz Mountains, in the Bavarian Forest and in the Fichtel Mountains. Despite its adaptability, many populations have been lost in the last 100 years.

The different nature of its habitats in the different regions is evidence of great **biodiversity within the species**, that is, genetic diversity within the species. Because of this feature and the completely unexplained reduction in its numbers, the dormouse is an important symbol of the biological diversity in Germany.



It is the small relative of the edible dormouse, feels at home in orchards, but also at the higher levels of low mountain ranges and can be unmistakably identified by its "Zorro mask":

the garden dormouse.

The garden dormouse lives only in Europe, and a large part of its distribution range lies in Germany. That is why Germany bears a great deal of responsibility for the worldwide survival of the garden dormouse.

Dormouse numbers have decreased massively in the last decades. It has already died out in many regions in Germany. There is no knowledge about the causes for this to date.



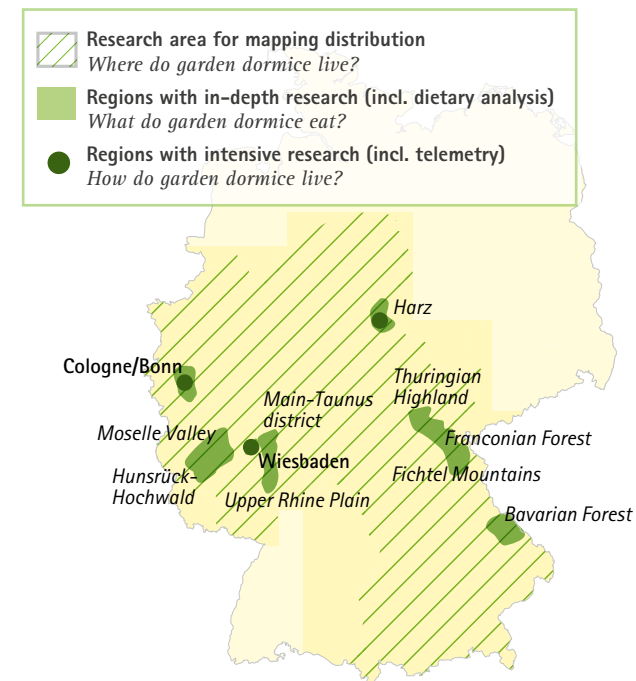
Researching and protecting

Although Germany bears a special responsibility for the survival of the garden dormouse, we know extremely little about the biology and distribution of the species. This is where BUND, the University of Gießen and the Senckenberg Society for Nature Protection come in. The project **In search of the garden dormouse** is funded by the Federal Programme for Biological Diversity. As part of the project that lasts from 2018 to 2024

- dietary analyses will be carried out,
- telemetry of individual animals will be conducted,
- garden dormice found dead will be examined for diseases and parasites,
- the temperature profile of the hibernation quarters will be observed and
- hair samples will be genetically analysed.

The results of these examinations will be used to develop targeted measures and then implement these.

Our goal: We want to secure the existing garden dormouse populations in a large part of their German distribution range.



We compile viewings of garden dormice from all over Germany at www.gartenschlaefer.de.

How can I help the garden dormouse?

With some small initial protective measures, you can already help the garden dormouse now:

- **Maintain or create opportunities for dormice to hide:** Tree hollows, wild shrubs and heaps of stones are important retreats for the nocturnally active garden dormice. Special nesting boxes for garden dormice are also helpful.
- **Help to preserve their habitat:** Orchards are not only a small paradise for garden dormice but are also a valuable habitat for numerous other animals and plants.
- **Cover your rainwater barrels:** This simple measure helps to save garden dormice from drowning.
- **Do not use rat poison in your garden.**

