

Sorex minutus LINNAEUS, 1766



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Distribution

World: Eurasia, from Portugal to Lake Baikal in Siberia.

Europe: most of Europe except for southern Iberia, the Mediterranean coasts and islands, and the Atlantic islands north of Scotland. The species is common in the British Isles as well as in Scandinavia and central Europe. South of the Alps, in southern France, on the Iberian Peninsula and in the Balkans the pygmy shrew is confined to higher altitudes, where its distribution becomes patchy. Pygmy shrews easily colonize islands by active dispersal or passive transport and are thus found temporarily on many islands in northern Europe.

Geographic variation

Pygmy shrews vary markedly in size from north to south, isolated populations in Spain, Italy and Greece being largest. Exceptional karyotypes have been found on the islands Öland and Gotland. Isolated populations in southern Europe need careful study in order to assess their degree of isolation and taxonomic status.

Habitat

The pygmy shrew occurs in a wide range of habitats, depending on latitude and elevation. Dunes and heathlands are common habitats along the North Atlantic coasts, while swamps and meadows are frequently used throughout its continental range. In southern Europe, montane forests up to 1700 m become more important.

Pygmy shrew

AL	-	LU	Kleng Spëtzmaus
BG	Малка кафявозъбка	LV	Mazais cirslis
CZ	Rejsek malý	MK	Мала ровка
DE	Zwergspitzmaus	MT	-
DK	Dværgspidsmus	NL	Dwergspitsmuis
EE	Väike-karihiir	NO	Dvergspissmus
ES	Musaraña enana	PL	Rujówka malutka
FI	Vaivaispäästäinen	PT	Musaranho-anão-de-dentes-vermelhos
FO	-	RO	Chițcanul-pitic
FR	Musaraigne pygmée	RU	Малая бурозубка
GR	Νανομυαλίφα	SE	Dvärgnäbbmus
HR	Mala rovka	SI	Mala rovka
HU	Törpecickány	SK	Piskor malý
IR	Dallóg fraoigh	TR	Cüce sivriburun
IS	Dvergsnjáldra	YU	Мала ровчица
IT	Toporagno nano		
LT	Kirstukas nykštukas		

Population status

Common in suitable habitats throughout its range. Particularly in swamps it may be the dominant small mammal species and even outnumber the common shrew *S. araneus*. Like most shrews, however, it depends on the presence of moist habitats with a rich plant cover and supply of invertebrates.

International legal & conservation status

Bern Convention, Appendix III.

Literature

Fredga *et al.* (1995)
Hutterer (1990) – review

R. Hutterer

