Rhinolophus ferrumequinum (Schreber, 1774)

T. P. McOwat

Greater horseshoe bat

AL	Lakuriqnate hundepatkua i madh	LU	Grouss Huffeisennues
BG	Голям подковонос	LV	-
CZ	Vrápenec velký	MK	Голем потковичар
DE	Große Hufeisennase	MT	Farfett il-Lejl tan-Nagħla Kbir; Rinolofu Kbir
DK	Stor hesteskonæse	NL	Grote hoefijzerneus
EE	Suur-sagarnina	NO	Stor hesteskonese
ES	Murciélago grande de herradura	PL	Podkowiec duży
FI	Isohevosenkenkäyökkö	PT	Morcego-de-ferradura-grande
FO	-	RO	Liliacul-cu-nas-potcoavă-mare
FR	Grand rhinolophe	RU	Большой подковонос
GR	Τρανορινόλοφος	SE	Stor hästskonäsa
HR	Veliki potkovnjak	SI	Veliki podkovnjak
HU	Nagy patkósdenevér	SK	Podkovár stíhlokrídly
IR	-	TR	Büyük nal burunlu yarasa
IS	Skeifublaka	YU	Велики потковичар
IT	Ferro di cavallo maggiore		
LT	-		

Rhinolophus ferrumequinum nippon Temminck, 1835 from northern and central China, Korea, and Japan may be a separate species.

Distribution

World: Palaearctic; temperate Eurasia from Britain to Japan, south to north-western Africa, Palestine, Iran, Pakistan and northern India.
Europe: southern and central Europe, also south and west Wales and south-western England.

Geographic variation

Six subspecies currently recognized, with two occurring in Europe: *R. ferrumequinum creticus* Iliopoulou-Georgudaki & Ondrias, 1986 (Crete) and *R. f. ferrumequinum* (remainder of European range and north-western Africa). Size clines occur, with larger specimens found in warmer climates.

Habitat

Requires warm caves, mines or attic roosts for summer births and development of young, adjacent to grazed permanent pastures and deciduous woodland. In mountains usually below 800 m altitude, rarely up to 2000 m. Mean temperature (minimum 10°C) in April and May is crucial since it determines birth timing and population levels. Hunts mainly beetles and moths at low levels over grass and in woodland or its edges by hawking or perch feeding. Sedentary. Distance between summer and winter roosts usually less than 20–30 km. Longest recorded movement 180 km.

Population status

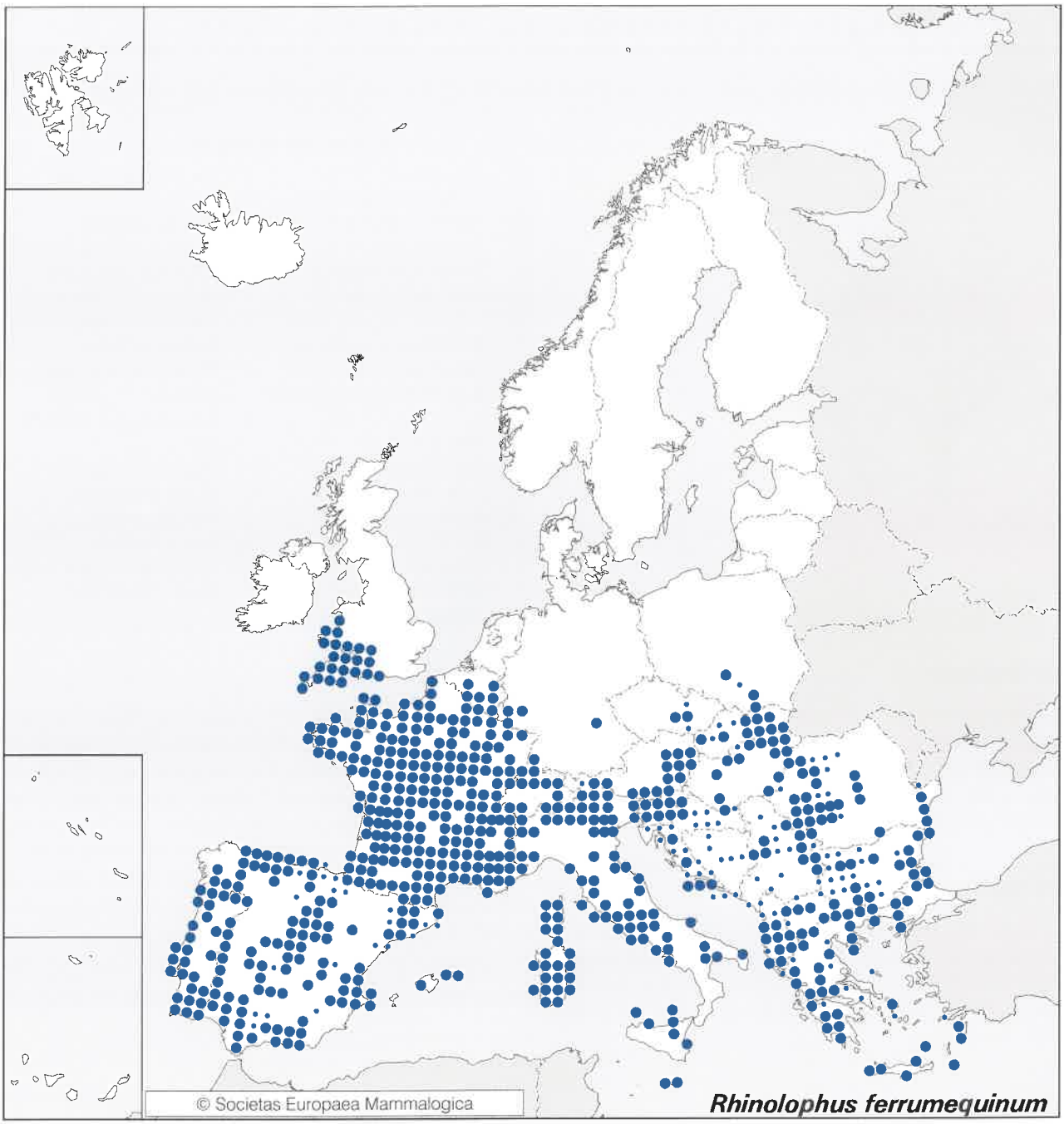
Documented population declines in the UK, based on long-term ringing studies, occurred in the early 1960s and 1980s and were probably due to negative weather conditions. The loss of insect food supplies due to insecticide use or changes in farming practices, and replacement of deciduous trees by conifers, either slowed recovery or made it impossible. Finally the loss of disused mines and human disturbance in caves have contributed to population declines in some regions.

International legal & conservation status

Bern Convention, Appendix II.
Bonn Convention, Appendix II.
EU Habitats & Species Directive, Annex II & Annex IV.
IUCN Red List, Lower Risk – conservation dependent.

Other information

Changes in habitat use may affect the larger *R. ferrumequinum* and smaller *R. hipposideros* differently. Declines in the former's populations seem to be linked to increases in the latter in south-west England.



Literature

Horáček (1984)
Kryštufek (1993)
Ransome (1989, 1990)
Ransome & McOwat (1994)

R. D. Ransome