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Abstract: Between February and April 2001, 6 lynx (3 males, 3 females) were caught in the cantons of Berne, Vaud and Fribourg. Four of these animals were released in couples in the cantons of Zurich and St. Gallen in March 2001, and 2 were set free separately in surrounding areas one month later. According to the LUNO schedule, 3 more lynx (1 male, 2 females) were caught in the Jura Mountains in late winter 2003, and released in the cantons of Zurich and St. Gallen. Five of the 6 animals released in 2001 have established their home ranges within 6 and 13 months (mean = 9 months), < 40 km from the release site (arithmetic centre of home range). One male disappeared about 5 months after release, and we subsequently observed the shift of home range of the neighbouring male. Home range size for the 2 remaining males amounts to 228 km<sup>2</sup> and 155 km<sup>2</sup> (100-% MCP). Home range size for the females varies between 83 km<sup>2</sup> and 122 km<sup>2</sup>. In 2002 one of the females was observed with 2 kittens. In 2003 the same female gave birth to another 2 kittens. Of the 3 lynx translocated in 2003, one subadult female seems to stay in the release area, whereas both older animals (1 male, 1 female) show "homing behaviour": Both lynx left the release area after 7 and 8 days, respectively, in the direction of the Jura mountains.

## **Translocation of lynx from western to eastern Switzerland – preliminary results**

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The failure of lynx to spread into new areas, and the resulting local high population densities in the north-western Swiss Alps lead to conflicts with sheep breeders and hunters. Therefore, in 2000, the Swiss Agency of Environment, Forest and Landscape implemented the Swiss Lynx Concept, a management plan for the lynx in Switzerland. An important consequence of the concept was the agreement between the federal authorities and several cantons to translocate 8–12 lynx (6 in the first project year) from the north-western Alps to eastern Switzerland. The establishment of a new population nucleus in the eastern Swiss Alps should help to join the isolated lynx populations in the north-western Alps and in the triangle of Austria, Slovenia and Italy, as it is recommended in the Pan-Alpine Conservation Strategy for the Lynx.

The LUNO Project (Luchsumsiedlung Nordostschweiz: lynx translocation north-eastern Switzerland) was thoroughly planned, following e.g. the IUCN recommendations for reintroductions, and started in late winter 2001.

Between February and April 2001, 6 lynx (3 males, 3 females) were caught in the cantons of Berne, Vaud and Fribourg. Four of these animals were released in couples in the cantons of Zurich and St. Gallen in March 2001, and 2 were set free separately in surrounding areas one month later. According to the LUNO schedule, 3 more lynx (1 male, 2 females) were caught in the Jura Mountains in late winter 2003, and released in the cantons of Zurich and St. Gallen. All animals underwent extensive veterinary checkups after their capture and before release. Since they were released, we have been closely following the translocated lynx by means of radio-telemetry.

Five of the 6 animals released in 2001 have established their home ranges within 6 and 13 months (mean = 9 months),  $\leq 40$  km from the release site (arithmetic centre of home range). One male disappeared about 5 months after release, and we subsequently observed the shift of home range of the neighbouring male. Home range size for the 2 remaining males amounts to 228 km<sup>2</sup> and 155 km<sup>2</sup> (100-% MCP). Home range size for the females varies between 83 km<sup>2</sup> and 122 km<sup>2</sup>. In 2002 one of the females was observed with 2 kittens. In 2003 the same female gave birth to another 2 kittens.

Of the 3 lynx translocated in 2003, one subadult female seems to stay in the release area, whereas both older animals (1 male, 1 female) show “homing behaviour”: Both lynx left the release area after 7 and 8 days, respectively, in the direction of the Jura mountains.

Between March 2001 and March 2003, we found 123 lynx kills by means of radio-tracking and reports of local people (80 roe deer, 38 chamois, 3 brown hares, 1 fox). Except one domestic goat killed by a female lynx, no depredation has been observed up to now.