

Dumitru MURARIU, 2022. *Romanian Fauna – Mammalia*, Volume XVI, Fascicle 5, *Carnivora*. The Publishing House of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest, 224 pages, 66 figures, one table.

One of the most important collections published by the Romanian Academy is called *The Romanian Fauna*. Between 2000 and 2005, its volumes (fascicles) that pertain to mammals were printed. The main contribution to this work is that of Acad. Dumitru Murariu, the most well-known and reputable mammology specialist in Romania.

In recent years, however, efforts have been made to publish these volumes, which come to approximately 100 pages, in English.

Thus, the Publishing House of the Romanian Academy which is issuing this prestigious collection, has recently published, in English, the 5th volume of the collection on the mammals of Romania, which is devoted to carnivores.

Acad. Dumitru Murariu structures the entire material in two parts – one general and the other systematic.

The general part begins – as expected – with a history of the research on carnivorous mammals. Later on, over an extensive number of pages, the latter's general characteristics are detailed. First of all, both the external and internal morphology were tackled first, to be followed by data on the way the populations are organized. Two significant aspects are those related to the geographical distribution of carnivores and their phylogeny. Highlighting the practical importance of carnivores was also an aspect included in the work. The general part ends with the enumeration of the methods of collection and research of these mammals.

More than three quarters of the volume is devoted to the systematic presentation of the order Carnivora. From the beginning, the systematic index of the carnivores making up the Romanian fauna was exposed, which includes 18 species classified into two suborders: Fissipedia (17 species) and Pinnipedia (one species). Next comes also the key to establishing the families of carnivores.

Four species are part of the Canidae family: the wolf (*Canis lupus* L., 1758), the golden jackal (*Canis aureus* L., 1758), the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes* L., 1758) and the raccoon dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides* Gray, 1843).

The Ursidae family consists only of the brown bear (*Ursus arctos* L., 1758).

Then comes the Mustelidae familie, comprising several species, such as: the ermine (*Mustela erminea* L., 1758), the common weasel (*Mustela nivalis* L., 1758), the European polecat (*Mustela putorius* L., 1758), the steppe ferret (*Mustela eversmannii* Lesson, 1827), the European mink (*Mustela lutreola* L., 1761), the American mink (*Mustela vison* Schreber, 1777), the pine marten (*Martes martes*

L., 1758), the beach marten (*Martes foina* Erxleben, 1777), the badger (*Meles meles* L., 1758), the otter (*Lutra lutra* L., 1758) and the marbled polecat (*Vormela peregusna* Gldenstaedt, 1770).

The wildcat (*Felis silvestris* Schreber, 1777) and the lynx (*Lynx lynx* L., 1758) are part of the Felidae family.

There is but one extremely rare species of the Pinnipedia suborder which can be found in the Black Sea – the Black Sea monk seal (*Monachus monachus* Hermann, 1779).

For each species, the work presents information regarding: its appearance, aspects of biology and ecology, feeding habits, reproduction, longevity, natural enemies, parasites, favorable habitats, biometric data, geographical distribution on the globe and in Romania, practical importance and intraspecific taxonomy. For each genus, the key elements in establishing each species are also presented, as are the synonymies within each species.

The text is rounded out by a number of 66 figures (maps, photos, sketches, sections).

The work is concluded by including a bibliography and an index of scientific names.

The volume of information to be found in the pages of this issue regarding carnivores is not only significant, but also diverse. This is due to the efforts of Acad. Dumitru Murariu, who has managed, with great perseverance and tenacity, to provide us with a not only exhaustive, but also very useful synthesis regarding the carnivorous mammals that exist on the geographical territory of Romania.

The fact that it is being also published in English greatly broadens its scope, making the data easily accessible to specialists all over the world.

The work is useful not only to zoologists and wildlife biologists, but also to ecologists, biogeographers, foresters, to those working in the field of biodiversity conservation, but also to all nature lovers.

We would like to convey our heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Acad. Dumitru Murariu for this publishing success.

Bucharest, April 10, 2023

Dr. Sorin GEACU