

## The Bavarian Beaver Re-extroductions

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### Abstract

The Bavarian beaver population, re-established between 1966 and the late 1970's has grown to about 5.000 animals in the year 2000. An increasing number of these animals settle in areas which are also heavily used by humans. If man-beaver conflicts in this areas can not be solved by land change, technical measures or damage compensation, beavers are trapped and removed.

From April 1996 to July 2000, a total of 283 beavers were trapped. These animals were used for reintroduction programs in Croatia, Hungary, Romania, and Belgium; some animals found new homes in zoos and game parks.

In this article we document Bavarian beaver trapping and export between 1996 and 2000 and present background information about the reintroduction programs for which these beavers have been used.

### Beaver trapping in Bavaria

The Bavarian beavers, reintroduced in the 1960's and 1970's, have grown to a estimated population of about 5.000 animals in 2000. An increasing number of beavers settle in habitats which are also heavily used by humans. Since 1996, when a beaver management began to evolve in Bavaria (Schwab 1998a), beavers are trapped and removed if man-beaver conflicts can not be solved by technical measurements or by set asides.

Due to legal and (mainly) security reasons, only live traps are used. Trapping season is from fall to spring; in case of severe problems, however, beavers can be trapped throughout the year.

From April 1996 to July 2000, a total of 283 beavers were trapped. They were mainly given to reintroduction programs in different countries, some animals were given to zoos and enclosures (Tab. 1, Fig. 1).

### The new homes for the Bavarian beavers

#### Croatia

Beaver reintroduction in Croatia was planed in 1993 as a co-operative project between the Forestry Faculty of the University of Zagreb and the Munich Wildlife Society (Grubestic & Schwab 1993). Between 1996 and 1998, 29 beavers were released in tributaries of the Drava river in the North of the country, and 56 beavers were released in tributaries of the Save river in central Croatia (Schwab 1998b). Population estimates for 2000 is approximately 130 animals (Grubestic et al. this volume). Some beavers have moved into Slovenia and into Hungary (Grubestic pers. comm.).

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Tab. 1. Beavers trapped in Bavaria from April 1996 to July 2000 and their fate.

Trapping season	Re-introduced in						Total
	HRO	H	RO	B	zoos	dead	
96/97	19	-	-	-	-	2	21
97/98	66	9	-	-	-	10	86
98/99	-	10	8	29	9	8	66
99/00	-	8	19	68	6 <sup>1</sup>	6	110
Total	85	27	27	97	15 <sup>1</sup>	26	283

<sup>1</sup>plus 2 animals born in captivity

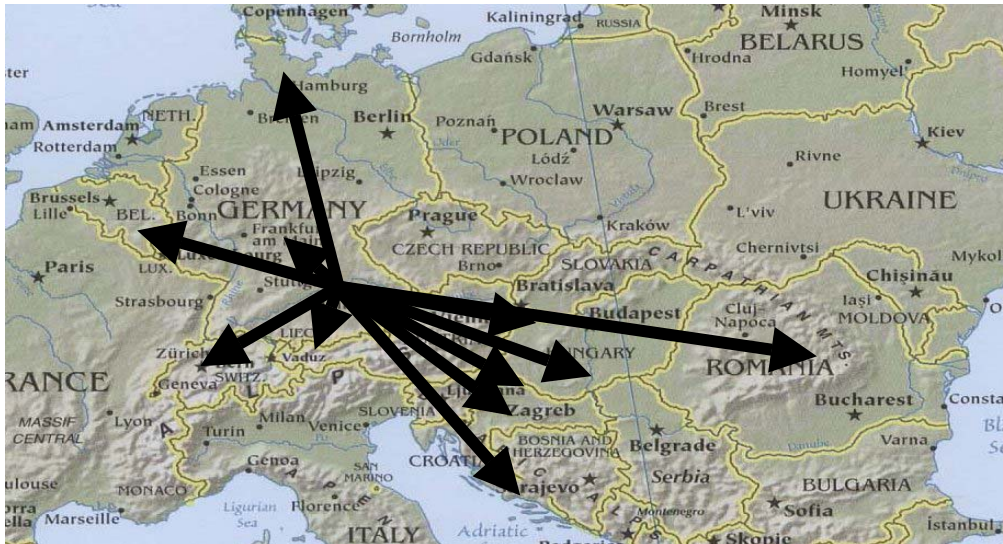


Fig 1. Bavarian beaver exports from 1996 to 2000.

Romania

Beaver reintroduction in Romania is a joint project of ICAS, the Romanian wildlife research institute and the Munich Wildlife Society (Ionescu et al. 1997). The project is supported by WWF Austria. In 1998 and 1999, 27 beavers were released at the Olt river near Brasov. Further releases are planned in several areas of Romania as part of the WWF Danube-Carpathian-Programme (Ionescu et al., this volume, Schwab & Lutschinger, this volume).

Belgium

Beaver reintroduction in Belgium started as a NGO-project in 1998 with the release of a family of beavers from the Elbe population, followed in 1998 and 1999 by 97 beavers from Bavaria. All beavers were released in Wallonia in southern Belgium. In the eastern part of Belgium there is also a small population originating from immigrants from the Eifel population in Germany (Rubbers pers. comm.). From Belgium, at least 1 beaver has moved into Luxembourg (Schley, pers. comm.).

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### Hungary

The first beavers that resettled in Hungary were immigrants from the Austrian population. Reintroduction of some animals from a German game park took place in the early 90's in central Hungary (Boszér, this volume).

In 1996, a joint project of WWF's Austria and Hungary with Hungarian National Parks started. Until spring 2000, 18 beavers from Austria and 27 beavers from Bavaria were released at Gemenc and Szigetköz national parks; further releases are planned (Boszér, this volume).

### Zoos and enclosures

17 Beavers were given to zoos and enclosures in Neumünster, Germany (5 beavers), Bad Kissingen, Germany (2 beavers), Biberwier, Austria (2 beavers), Split, Croatia (2 beavers), and Bern, Switzerland (3 trips, with 2, 1, and 3 beavers).

### References

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