



13. SUMMARY

American mink is an species of Carnivore from North America, that recently was introduced in Iberian Peninsula. The farms where this mustelid was bred have been which caused this introduction.

In Spain, the farms of minks are in Northern, especially in Galicia, but also are very numerous in Cantabria and Basque Provinces. Also, there are in Catalonia, Navarre, Aragon, Valencia and Castile-Leon. Actually, the number of farms are decreasing due to a saturation and back regression of furrier market.

In Spain, there are four stable wild populations of American mink: Galicia, Central Spain, Catalonia and Aragon.

In Galicia, there are populations isolated, Southwest Pontevedra and Mero river (La Coruña). Galicia is the area where the farms are more numerous and the habitat are suitable for American mink. Its distribution has increased considerably in recent years.

In Catalonia, the mink live in part of Barcelona and Girona provinces. All actual population come from two farms, actually closed. The rate of growth is high, in the several directions, but preferably in the directions of North and East.

In Central Spain have the biggest populations of Spain, with a distribution of 113 U.T.M. squares (10x10 km). In the direction North growth very quickly.

The recentest population (1990) is in Teruel, coming from a only farm.

Besides, there are observations of American mink in Basque provinces and Cantabria but we don't have confirmation of the presence of stable populations.

The presence of otter, a mustelid more efficacious than American mink in very preserved ecosystems, is a reason of the no growth of American mink populations in several areas of Central Spain and Galicia, apparently. On the contrary, when the otter is thin or absent, the mink populations growth considerably.

Finally, we had realized a study about American mink diet in Central Spain and Catalonia, and we enumerated a small roll of recommendations for management of mink in Spain.