Edible Dormouse, *Glis glis*

**Overview**

Short description of *Glis glis*, Edible Dormouse
The edible dormouse has pale grey fur with a whiter underside and a long bushy grey tail. The eyes are prominent and dark. The body length of edible dormouse is no more than 20 cm, to which is added up to 19 cm for the tail. Aside from its much smaller size, it can be distinguished from a grey squirrel most easily by its thinner tail, which lacks the squirrel's paler fringing and is usually held flat.

**Description of *Glis glis*, Edible Dormouse status in GB**
A thriving population of around 10,000 edible dormice exists in the Chilterns and the species may also be established in the New Forest in Hampshire and in the Oxford area.

**Habitat summary: *Glis glis*, Edible Dormouse**
The edible dormouse inhabits woodland, parkland and gardens, often entering houses for food or shelter. They are rarely seen, however, because of their mainly nocturnal behaviour and long hibernation.

**Overview table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment:</th>
<th>Terrestrial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Species status:</td>
<td>Non-Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native range:</td>
<td>Middle Europe, Southwestern Europe, Southeastern Europe, Caucasus, Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Belarus, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, France, Gruziya, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Iran, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia Central, Russia East, Russia North, Russia Northwest, Russia South, Slovenia, Slovakia, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Functional type:</td>
<td>Herbivore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status in England:</td>
<td>Non-Native</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status in Scotland:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status in Wales:</td>
<td>Non-Native</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location of first record:</td>
<td>Tring Park</td>
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<td>Date of first record:</td>
<td>1902</td>
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**Invasion history: *Glis glis*, Edible Dormouse**

**Origin**
The species is thought to have been brought to England from continental Europe, probably Hungary, Germany or Switzerland.
Edible dormice were first released into Tring Park in 1902. The month of release is reported to be February, but the animals would have been in hibernation at that season.

Pathway and Method
The release of this species at Tring Park formed part of the collection of exotic animals being assembled at this site by the late Lord Rothschild. No other primary sources are known.

Species Status
After the initial introduction there was a gap of 20–30 years before the species began to be noticed in numbers, and to expand its range.

Ecology & Habitat: *Glis glis*, Edible Dormouse

Dispersal Mechanisms
The Chiltern population has spread no more than 35 km from its release point in more than a century, possibly being limited by the distribution of appropriate habitat. Occurrences in localities as distant as Shropshire and Hampshire are all believed to relate to translocations from the Chilterns.

Reproduction
Females make a nest in a tree-hollow, among rocks, or in a nest-box, and produce a litter of 2–9 young, once per year. Males mark territories with scent-marks and calls and may mate with more than one female.

Known Predators/Herbivores
Edible dormice are preyed upon by nocturnal hunters such as tawny owl, domestic cats, stoats and weasels.

Resistant Stages
None.

Habitat Occupied in GB
In England, as in its native range, it favours beech woodlands, especially where admixed with conifers.

Distribution: *Glis glis*, Edible Dormouse
The main population in GB is centred on Tring in Hertfordshire and extends through the Chiltern Hills from Beaconsfield to Luton. The species is native from northern Spain across Europe and the Caucasus to northwest Iran, occurring north to Latvia. No introduced populations are documented, other than that in England.

Impacts: *Glis glis*, Edible Dormouse

Environmental Impact
Damage may be caused to trees through bark-stripping and ring-barking, and to fruit crops in orchards.

Health and Social Impact
The readiness of edible dormice to enter houses and outbuildings leads to considerable problems for householders. The animals are noisy vocally and in their movements, they gnaw timbers and wiring, foul surfaces with their droppings, and sometimes drown in water-tanks.

Economic Impact
Economic damage may be caused to trees through bark-stripping and ring-barking, and to fruit crops in orchards.

References & Links: *Glis glis*, Edible Dormouse

Identification

Biology, ecology, spread, vectors
Management and impact

General
http://www.arkive.org/fat-dormouse/glis-glisinfo.html


https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/downloadDocument.cfm?id=1378