

FIELD RESEARCH ON SMALL RODENTS

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Studies of population fluctuation in small rodents date back to the roots of ecological research. The field studies mainly aim to answer basic questions relating to population dynamics, ecophysiology and functioning of natural ecosystems.

Intrusive methods may include banding by small radio transmitters and individual markings by ear tags, toe-clipping or PIT-tags.

Experimental treatments may apply to the individuals, such as anti-parasite treatments, or to the local environment (e.g. predator exclusion or degree of habitat fragmentation).

Ecophysiological studies may also make use of doubly labelled water techniques and measurements of physiological conditions by taking blood samples and measuring total body electrical conductivity (TOBEC).