

# Projects StadtWildTiere & Wilde Nachbarn – Monitoring urban and suburban wildlife with Citizen Science in Austria, Germany and Switzerland

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## Goals

Since 2013 the projects “StadtWildTiere” and “Wilde Nachbarn” have been running in several cities and communities in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. While “StadtWildTiere” targets an urban audience, the project “Wilde Nachbarn” caters to the more suburban regions.

The aims of the projects are:

- 1) Increase public awareness of urban wildlife and its needs
- 2) Fill knowledge gaps using citizen science
- 3) Protect and promote urban wildlife and urban biodiversity

## Local projects

### StadtWildTiere

Local projects in the cities of Berlin, Bern, Chur, Lucerne, St.Gallen, Vienna, Winterthur and Zurich

### Wilde Nachbarn

Local projects in the regions of Baden-Württemberg, Pfannenstil, additionally the platform is used for the new Swiss mammal atlas (also in French, nosvoisins Sauvages.ch)

## Project modules

### Interactive online platform

- Collection of sight observations from the public
- Information about urban and suburban wildlife
- Tips and tricks for observations and coexistence with wildlife

### Network of trained volunteers

- Network of volunteers in charge of a particular area
- Ambassadors of the project in their areas

### Annual programs

- Programs targeting a particular species or group of species
- Active involvement of trained volunteers and the public
- Two examples in the column on the right side



Figure 1. Urban fox © Anne DeiglMayr / stadtwildtiere.ch

## Conclusions

- Citizen science involvement through thousands of observers who contribute sightings and are committed to urban wildlife
- Interactive map with georeferenced, time-stamped records (currently 24'320 observations) of urban mammal, reptile and amphibian species
- The projects provide powerful tools to address scientific questions and to foster wildlife conservation. The use of data is open to scientific cooperation: multiple analyses are running and some results are already published<sup>1,2,3</sup>.



## Citizen science for the hedgehogs

- As part of the new Swiss mammal atlas the distribution of hedgehogs in Switzerland is currently being investigated using citizen science.
- The two methods used are: Footprint tunnels monitored by volunteers and observations collected by the public.
- Study areas were chosen in parts of the country where no hedgehogs sightings were known within the last 10 years.



## The Big5 of the urban jungle

- After developing the program “Big5 gesucht” in Zurich in 2014, the program was deployed in St.Gallen in 2016. Within the 6 months of the projects running, 719 observations of the “Big5” – fox, badger, roe deer, red squirrel and hedgehog – were noted in St.Gallen and Zurich.
- Camera traps and observations from the public were used to create and compare distribution maps of these five species.
- The data from Zurich and St.Gallen were combined to analyze the rise of urban badgers in Switzerland. The results are presented in a publication on the rise of urban badgers<sup>1</sup>.

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References:

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[3] Frigerio et al., Ethology 2018