TIME BUDGET, 24-HOUR ACTIVITY AND FEEDING OF THE FOREST DORMOUSE

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These studies are a continuation of the paper presented at the 3rd International Conference on Dormice, in Croatia. Activity of the Forest Dormouse (*Dryomys nitedula*) was observed in captivity under natural light and temperature conditions. 24-hour observations were conducted by the shutter method every 5 minutes. In total, 102 observations were collected, coming from all months of a year. Six types of behaviour were distinguished: feeding (F), drinking (D), exploration (E), resting outside the nestbox (R), observation from the nestbox entrance (O/N), cleaning (C).

In general, the time budget was as follows: 65% (F), 16% (R), 13% (E), 2% (each of types D, O/N, C). However, distinct differences in the time budget were found in relation to the mean 24-hour temperature (it was compared in three classes – below 12.3 °C, 12.3–15.0 °C, over 15.0 °C). The share of feeding increased with the temperature fall, initially – at the cost of exploration, then – of resting. Shares of three other classes (D, O/N, C) remained unchanged. In September, a new type of activity, lacking in other periods, was noted – changing the material in the nestbox. The intensity of feeding varied (in relation to the period of activity – 100%) at different times: it was the lowest (45%) between 18 h and 20 h and highest between 6 h and 13 h (from 80 to 85%). Generally, animals were foraging most intensively from 24 h to 3 h.