

# Sympatric Distribution of the Sibling Vole Species *Microtus arvalis* and *Microtus levis* (Rodentia: Cricetidae) in Bulgaria

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**Abstract:** The distribution of the common vole (*Microtus arvalis*) and the East-European vole (*Microtus levis*), based on skull specimens originating from 25 localities (pooled into 14 groups) with different physiological conditions in Bulgaria was studied. Each specimen was classified as *M. arvalis* or *M. levis* by discriminating morphometric key with high classification ability. It was found that both species occurred jointly in 23 localities situated in North-Eastern Bulgaria, at the foot of Stara Planina, in the high mountain fields of Stara Planina, Sredna Gora and Western Bulgaria, in the sub-Balkan fields and in the South Bulgarian Black Sea coast. In two of the studied localities (near the town of Dobrich and in the Vitinya country) only the common voles were presented.

**Key words:** sibling species, *Microtus arvalis*, *Microtus levis*, sympatric distribution