

Die Maus, die sich nicht traut? Kleinsäuger im Vorfeld des Morteratschgletschers

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The Morteratsch glacier has been drawing backwards quickly for 100 years and has set new areas free. It has taken years for the first pioneer plants to settle the new areas. The objectives of this report were to find out if there are small mammals on the glacier forefield, what for small mammals there are and what kind of small mammals have taken the role of pioneers.

To answer these questions we divided the glacier forefield into 10 different areas. Area 1 was near the station "Morteratsch" and area 10 was near the glacier on the right side of the valley. In each area we placed 20 Longworth traps in a distance of 10 meters. We controlled the areas 1 to 5 during the first three days and areas 6 to 10 during the second three days. The traps were checked and emptied once in the morning and once in the evening. All in all we had 100 traps in two series at five areas which we checked during six days.

The animals were determined, weighed and marked if they were from the order of rodents and set free again.

We caught seven different kinds of small mammals from seven species. There were *Apodemus alpicola*, *Apodemus sylvaticus*, *Chionomys nivalis*, *Clethrionomys glareolus*, *Pitymys subterraneus*, *Neomys fodiens* and *Sorex araneus*.

Apodemus alpicola was caught in area 10 which has been free of ice for approximately 25 years. It is the pioneer on the forefield of the Morteratsch glacier.