

## Abstract

### Study of the behavior of the alpine ibex (*Capra ibex*) in an accessible wildlife enclosure

The *Capra ibex* (Alpine ibex) is a significant landmark of the Alpine region. In the past it has been credited with a great deal of healing power, and it has been on the verge of extinction before being successfully reintroduced (Bauer o.J.). With the reintroduction of seven alpine ibexes in a wildlife enclosure in Sankt Leonhard im Pitztal in 2020, the question arose to which extent the alpine ibexes react to the fact that visitors can cross the enclosure on a path. No research has been done on the behavior of Alpine ibex in captivity, so this study focuses on the relationship between time in the enclosure, differences in the group, visitor numbers, and weather with behavior. For further work on behavioral observation, a stress value depending on the ibex behavior was assigned. For this purpose, behavioral observations of the seven ibexes took place twice a week in the period from 12.08.2020 to 15.11.2020. At the same time, the flow of visitors and the weather were documented.

During the investigation it turned out that the stress values per day sank with the time. In the group there are differences of stress values per day with age. Thus, older individuals had higher stress values in the total sum of the period than younger alpine ibexes. In connection with the number of visitors, it can be stated that the alpine ibex had a higher stress value the higher the number of visitors was. However, it is not possible to distinguish between the time factor and the number of visitors. The weather did not play a significant role in terms of air temperature at the time of the observation and in terms of precipitation. It can be said that the stress value was lower on days with high precipitation.

The investigation demonstrated that many factors play a role in the behavior and stress levels of the seven ibexes and these current results only give an insight into the group of seven ibexes in the natural reserve of the Pitztal. Therefore, it would be important to follow up with further investigations at this point.