ECOMORPHOLOGY OF THE GENUS APODE*M*US (MURIDAE: RODENTIA): MORPHOMETRY OF POSTCRANIAL SKELETON

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We studied postcranial skeleton of 264 wood mice belonging to seven species: A. *agrarius*, A. *mystacinus*, A. h*yrcanicus*, A. h*ermonensis*, A. u*ralensis* (=*microps*), A. f*lavicollis*, and A. *sylvaticus*. Species occupying large geographic areas were represented by two geographically distant populations. Thirty five measurements were recorded and treated with multivariate statistic analysis, based both on original and size adjusted data. The test revealed clear differentiation between taxa representing single subgenera - K*arstomys*, Apod*emus*, S*ylvaemus* - which exhibit also different ecological strategies. The position of control sample A. p*eninsulae* (subgenus Apod*emus*) in morphospace indicated the adaptive nature of observed phenomenon as did also the range of studied traits responsible for it. Within subgenus S*ylvaemus*, the A. *sylvaticus* revealed clear morphological separation from other taxa of this subgenus, which were arranged successively in morphospace with A. u*ralensis* and A. f*lavicollis* being in extreme positions. Adaptive explanation of observed pattern is discussed.