

SURVEY OF SMALL MAMMALS (RODENTIA AND DIDELPHIMORPHIA) IN A  
CERRADO RESERVE: CENTRAL ESPINHAÇO MOUNTAIN RANGE, BRAZIL

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**ABSTRACT:** Despite its high diversity, small mammals within the Cerrado (savanna) domain at the Central Espinhaço Range are poorly known, and precise information regarding the geographical distribution of all species is still scarce. Here we present data on small-sized mammals (Didelphimorphia and Rodentia) from Parque Estadual do Rio Preto (PERP), a protect area in the Central Espinhaço, compare the species composition of this area with other protected areas in the Espinhaço Range and discuss the conservation potential of PERP based on the small mammal richness in relation to other protected areas in the Espinhaço. Over the course of 10.616 trap-nights, there were 700 captures of 245 individuals, being eight species from order Didelphimorphia and eight from Rodentia, with an overall capture rate of 6.6%. We report both, *Gracilinanus agilis* and *G. microtarsus*, occurring in sympatry and the occurrence of *Thalpomys lasiotis*, known to be endemic to the Cerrado biome. We observed that the species composition of the Central Espinhaço contains a set of species different from those found in Southern Espinhaço (Serra de Ouro Branco). This may be most the result of vegetal physiognomies among the inventoried areas and less clearly the result of geographic distance between them. Our results reinforce the importance of protected areas covering the different vegetation physiognomies of Cerrado to protect the diversity of mammalian fauna of this complex biome.

**KEYWORDS:** Espinhaço Range, Mammalia, Species composition, Tropical Savanna