

“ WHICH UNUSUAL GUEST FROM THE NORTH HAS ALREADY BEEN A VISITOR TO THE HOLLABRUNN FOREST? ”

- A: Reindeer
- B: Arctic wolf
- C: Wolverine
- D: Elk



Please use the grey stamp!

“ Did you know that the tip of the tail of the **WILDCAT** is always black? ”



Please use the white stamp!



An **ELK** actually  
paid us a visit in  
the forest!



“Elks are known as animals of the north. But they too set off on migrations of thousands of miles if the living conditions in their ancestral areas deteriorate. That is why they sometimes stop by here in the forest. Austria, however, is not suitable for a longer stay or a permanent relocation of the territory of these majestic animals.”

# ON THEIR TRAVELS

## THE SEARCH FOR AN EASIER LIFE

In the natural world, most animals have a specific area that they inhabit. This habitat is called a territory. The size of a territory differs depending on the type of animal and encompasses those landscape types which the animal needs to search for food and for reproduction. When resources become scarce, the habitat is destroyed, or there is no partner for mating, animals leave their territory and go searching for better living conditions. This can be both temporary and regular as life circumstances can change in the course of the year and only a certain amount of time has to be bridged. However, it can also happen that animals have to leave their ancestral home permanently.

In both cases, they go on their travels. The landscape is being increasingly carved up which means it is becoming more and more difficult for animals to pave the way to a better life. Many achievements on the part of the human race pose insurmountable hurdles for them. For example, they cannot cross wide motorways. Extensive areas without any places to hide are therefore difficult for them.

To preserve the migratory routes of the animals or to restore them, there are now numerous efforts on the part of conservationists in conjunction with the affected communities, countries or states to retain the current status or bring about improvements.



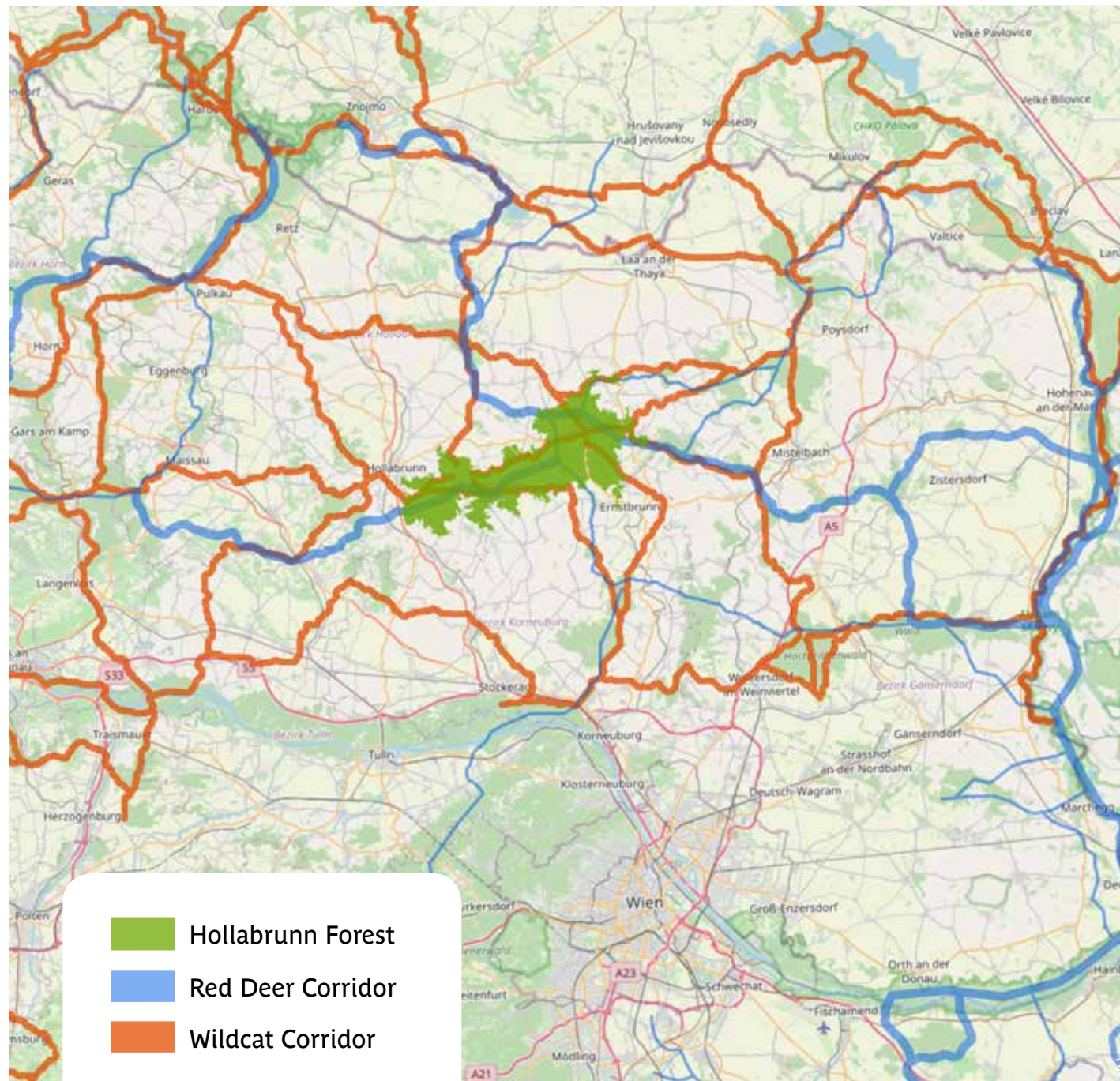
We wildcats wander undetected through the Hollabrunn Forest on our quiet paws. Our journey took us from the Czech Republic to Austria.

No one knows exactly when we migrated back to Austria and how many of us are actually here. This is due to the fact that we are very shy and steer clear of people as much as possible. Humans only manage to get a few hairs of our fur as proof of our presence by means of lures to which irresistible valerian fragrance is applied.



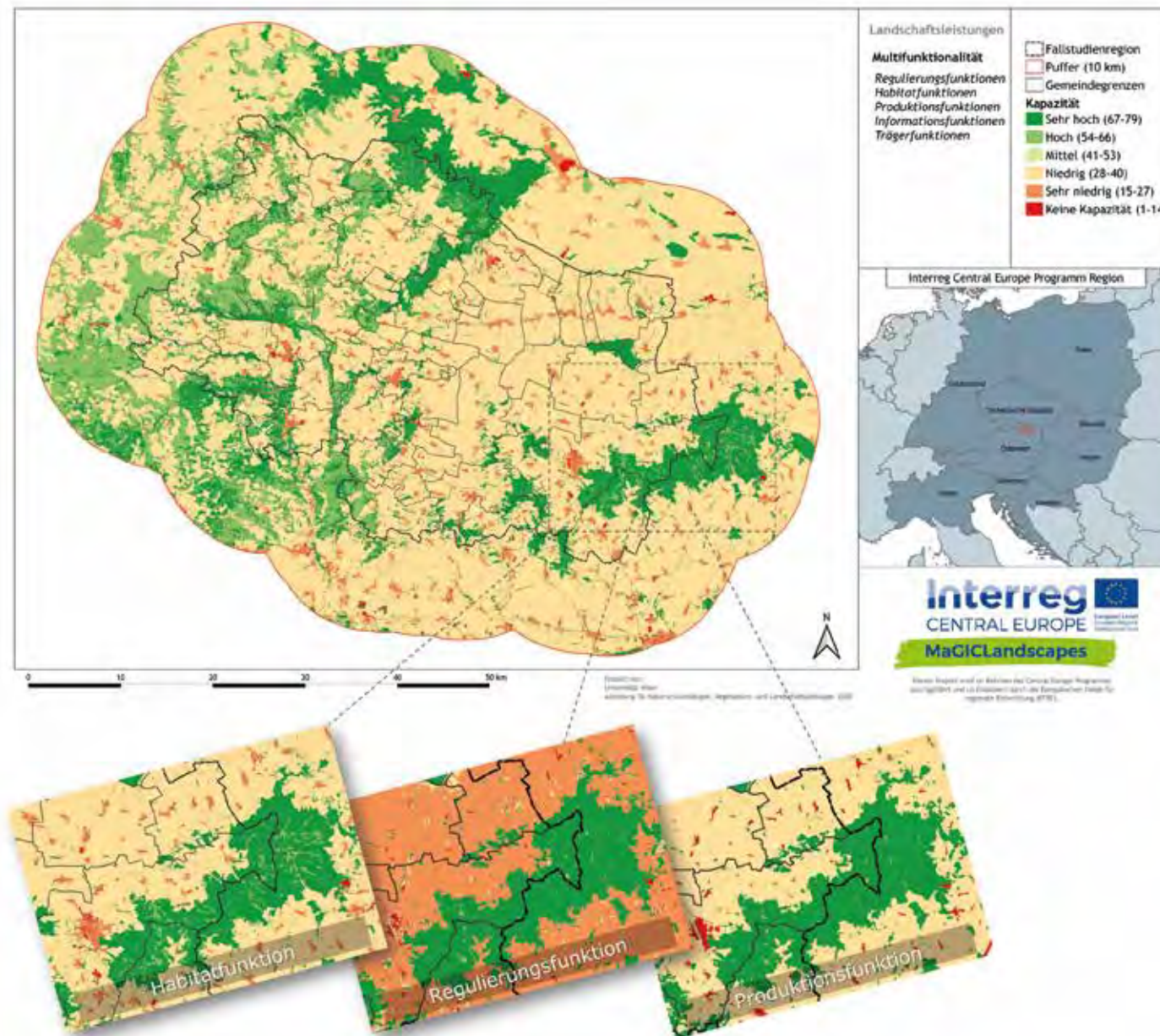
The adventure trail is a pilot investment of the VISIO project. It is realised within the framework of the INTERREG V-A, SK-AT programme and co-financed by ERDF.





The large area of the Hollabrunn Forest and its continuation in biotope islands towards the northeast form a secondary route of the Alpine Carpathian Wildlife corridor. The corridor is the most important connecting axis for animals living in the wild between the two massifs. The wildlife corridors in the Weinviertel are ancient corridors that are used regularly by the following species: wildcats, lynxes, small game and red deer, first and foremost. There has even been an elk there once who paid with its life when it tried to cross a street in the early morning.)

## Functionality of Green Infrastructure



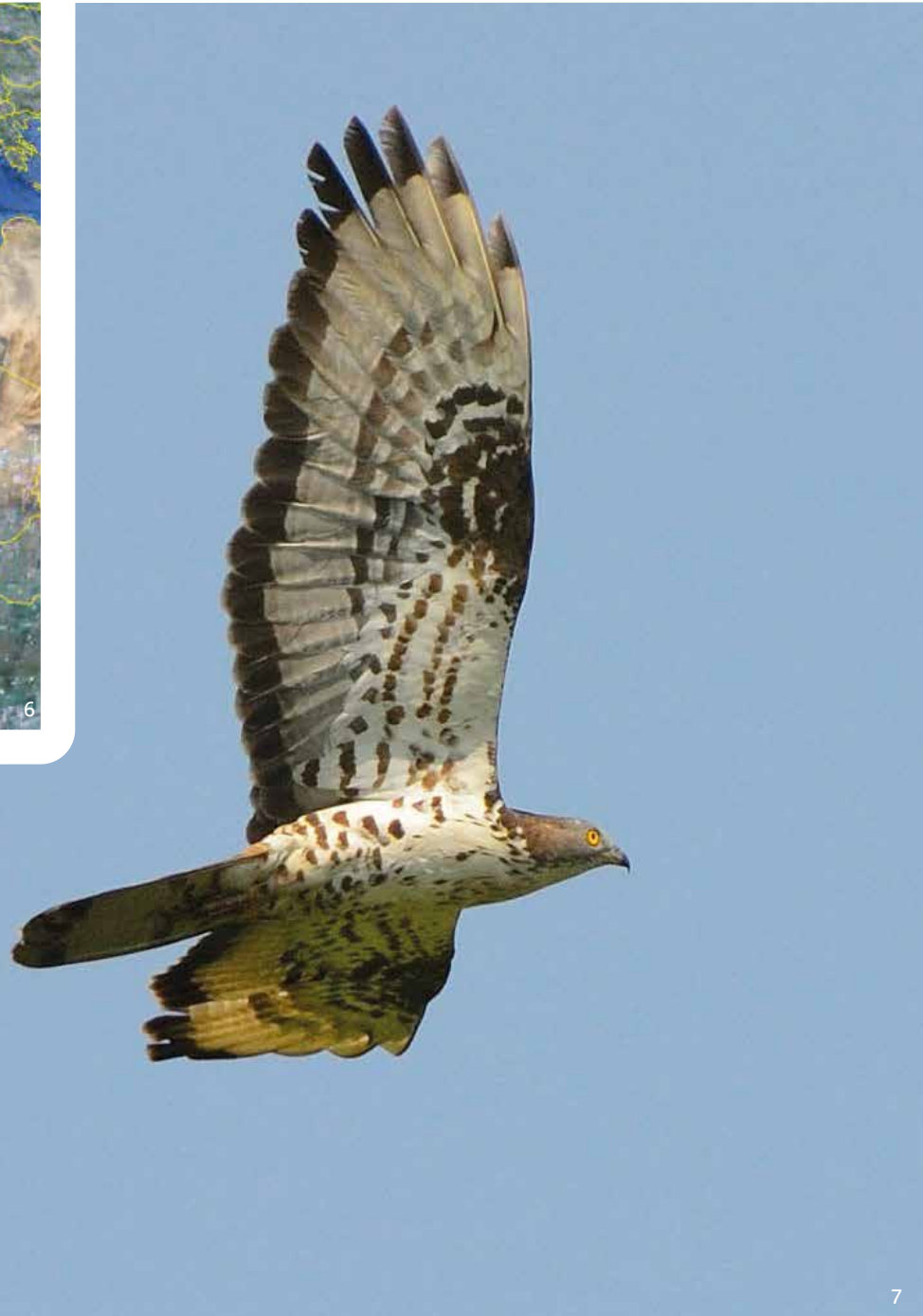
Comprehensive analyses of the connectivity and functionality of green infrastructure as part of the EU Project Interreg “Ma-GIC-Landscapes” have clearly shown that, as an important core area, this major forest in the central Weinviertel is of enormous significance as a migration corridor for wildlife. It is a valuable habitat, helps to preserve biodiversity, improves people’s living conditions as well as their well-being and lessens the effects of climate change.



For a long time in Austria, the European Wildcat was regarded as being extinct. Since 2007, there have been more and more indications that this shy animal has returned to the Waldviertel and Weinviertel regions and has even gone as far as Styria. The wildcat can find many suitable habitats in Central Europe. The problem however is the links between these habitats. Wildcats avoid large, open areas. The demands regarding the green infrastructure when one wildcat family tries to migrate to another wildcat family are high.



The major intervention of humans in Europe's landscape is resulting in increasing dismemberment of individual habitats. Where animals once could traverse the land undetected and in safety, today there are streets, new housing developments or the land is used by industry. Linking the individual habitats to each other is an important building block in the attempt to preserve biological diversity. Without the exchange of genetic material, biodiversity is at stake. Wildlife crossings, also known as "green bridges" often do not exist.



For migratory birds, the Hollabrunn Forest is an important landmark and a place to rest, sleep, congregate, and nest. The honey buzzard relies more on forests than any other type of bird of prey. In 2009-2011, Christian Friedl, in collaboration with the Museum of Natural History, fitted 5 young birds with GPS transmitters. As a result, it was possible to verify their migratory routes into tropical Africa via Villach, the Balkans, the Sahara and their return via Gibraltar to their native breeding ground.





What is a wildlife corridor actually? This is a section of landscape along a migratory route which features more favourable structures in comparison to the surrounding area. Here for example there are more hedges, more forest or no large roads. Animals feel more at ease, can move around more safely and make more progress with their migrations. Intact wildlife corridors create a good connection between separate 7 habitats and populations.