

# THE WILD BOAR (*Sus scrofa*) IN THE GRAN PARADISO NATIONAL PARK (ITALY): PRESENCE AND DISTRIBUTION

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The distribution of Wild boar in the Gran Paradiso National Park (Western Italian Alps), between 1987 and 1993 is presented (Fig. 1). Prior to this period indications regarding the presence of this ungulate, never recorded before in this area in historical times, were the exception and confined to limited low-level areas on the Piedmont side of the Park (Soana valley).

From 1987 onwards direct and indirect reports of the presence of this animal have become increasingly numerous and more and more within the Park itself. The valleys which have the greatest populations of this ungulate are those on the Piedmont side of the Park (Orco and Soana valleys) which are doubtless more suitable to Wild boar from the point of view of physiognomy and vegetation.

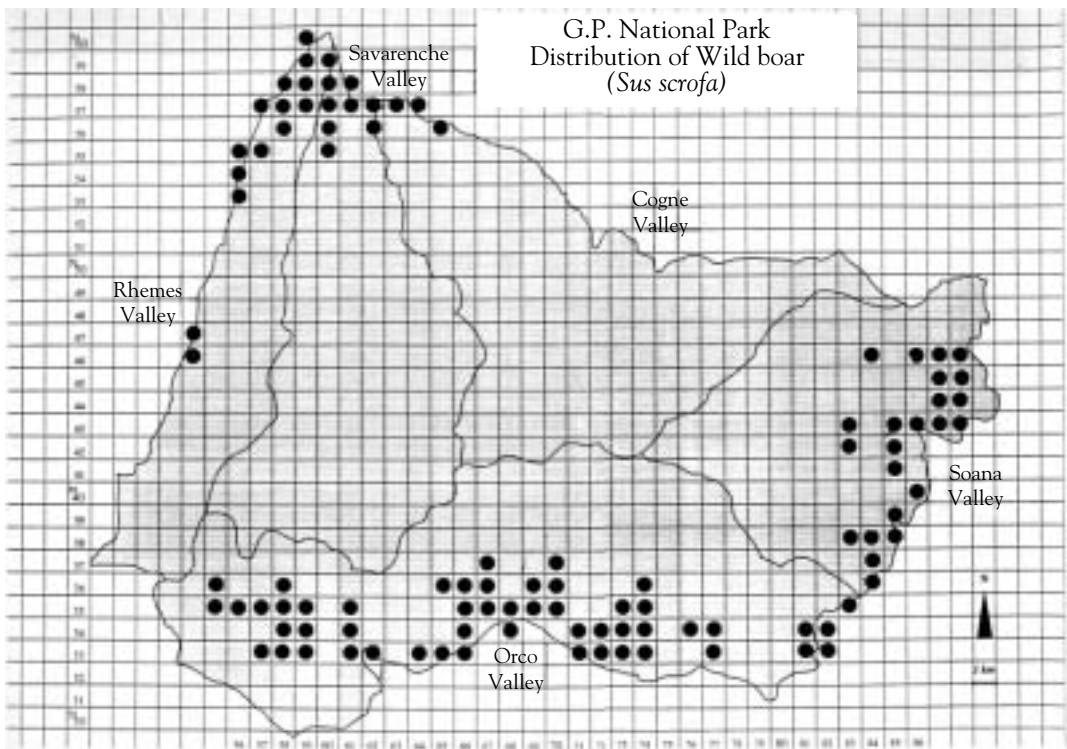


Figure 1 - Gran Paradiso National Park: distribution of Wild boar. □ = 1 km<sup>2</sup> ● = Presence of Wild boar

The year in which the initial first-hand reports were given and the highest altitudes at which traces of their presence were found, both directly or indirectly, are given for each valley, together with the sightings of sows with newborn or striped young.

**Soana valley:**

First direct sightings in the spring of 1987; highest altitude at which sighted: 2,150 m - Alpe Giuoco; highest altitude sighting of female(s) with striped litter: 1,350 m, at the end of September (2 females with 2 litter of 5).

**Orco valley:**

First direct sightings: 1987; highest altitude: 2,600 m - Gran Piano, trace of presence on alpine pasture; highest altitude sighting of female(s) with litter: 1,800 m - Gran Prà, at the end of June (1 female with litter of 4).

**Rhemes valley:**

First traces: 1988; highest level: 2,000 m on north-western slopes of Mont Blanc; highest altitude sighting of female(s) with young: 1,750 m - Mt. Puppet (1 female with suckling litter of 4).

The Cogne and Valsavarenche valley today still note only marginal reports of the presence of Wild boar. The reports in the Cogne valley are limited to the areas at the valley bottom at the edge of the Park, while some reports testify its presence at the head of the Valsavarenche valley on the orographic left, up to a height of 1,800 m and in the valley bottom (Fenille - 1,300 m).

In some lower areas of deciduous woodland in the Soana valley, a gradual modification of the areas occupied by Chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra rupicapra*) has been noted probably following the arrival and establishment of the Wild boar.