

Food preferences of red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) in Kastamonu Ilgaz Mountains National Park

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Abstract: Diets of wild animals are useful tools for researching and understanding their ecology, behaviour and the management of wildlife. Ruminants are the mammals that are one of important species of wildlife and game. The red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) is one of the largest deer species of Europe. Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) is an important species that can influence vegetation of forest with its food preferences, anther rubbing and grazing. In this study diet of red deer (*C. elaphus*) which distributed in Kastamonu Ilgaz Mountains National Park were determined. A combine of camera traps, direct observations of red deer were used as methods of researching the diet of red deers. Plants which are eaten by red deer, were collected from the field and species were identified in the Herbarium. Due to results of study, suggestions on management and conservation strategies were discussed.

Keywords: Red deer, Diet, Wildlife, Kastamonu, Ilgaz