

OSTEOMETRICAL ANALYSIS OF SKULLS IN RED FOXES AND RACCOON DOGS

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Abstract. The aim of this work was to perform osteometrical analysis of skulls in red foxes and raccoon dogs in Lithuania. Fifteen red foxes and fifteen raccoon dogs skulls and mandibles were analyzed using the measuring method described by A. Von den Driesch (1976). Skulls were measured at the 27 measurement points, mandibles were measured at the 12 measurement points, and the indexes of skull, cranium and face were calculated. It was determined that foxes had longer and wider skulls in comparison to raccoon dogs skulls. Furthermore, 25 statistically significant differences were found between measurements in males and 18 between measurements in females ($P < 0.05$). Red foxes mandibles were longer compared to raccoon dogs, furthermore, 11 and 9 statistically significant differences in measurements were obtained between males and females, respectively. Five skulls and six mandibles features of the male foxes were statistically significantly longer compared to the same females foxes features ($P < 0.05$). Skull, cranium and face indexes of the raccoon dogs were higher compared of the red foxes. It is possible to use mentioned indexes for the differentiation of skulls of these animals.

Keywords: red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes* L.), raccoon Dogs (*Nyctereutes procyonoides* Gray), osteometry, skull, mandible.