



Game management culture and traditions



Not even game management, which continues the rich heritage originated in the distant past, defends development. Game management tradition is part of game-keepers life and guides them through their all meetings. The tradition reveals itself in the style of wearing of clothes, in the game-keeper's speech and also in the traditional music.

Sounding the horn is not heard only at the hunt but also at the formal meetings on the occasion of game keeper examinations, competitions and family meetings connected with christening, marriage or a game-keeper's funeral. Experience passed down from generation to generation is preserved for the future.

When the Earl František Antonín Sporck founded the Saint Hubert Order in 1965 and sent his two apprentices to France to learn to sound the horn, he certainly did not have a feeling that the horn sounding tradition was to be preserved into this time.

The hunting signals and fanfares we can hear at all hunting actions. Our ensembles collect the awards in the horn blower international competitions. New hunting compositions by contemporary authors are the proof that hunting music still lives on. The Horn-blower Championship is organized in the Czech Republic every year, often with the participation of horn-blowers from Germany, Austria, Slovakia and Poland.

Calling of the game is another skill which almost every hunter knows. The 7th European Championship in calling of the red deer stag will take place in 2005. Competitors from ten European countries will participate in the championship. About 10,000 guests visit this event each time.

Hunting has inspired many painters, sculptors, writers, photographers as well as composers. Collections in castles and museums are the proof of an earlier rich game management culture.

The nature photographer's club and the horn-blower's club are members of the Czech-Moravian hunting union. Several of our photographers have been awarded abroad. The photographers Sláva Štochl, Jaromír Zumr senior and Přemysl Pavlík have won the gold medal CIC for their photographs.

The Czech-Moravian hunting union awards the Cultural prize to an artist or a writer for an outstanding or life's work in the field of hunting art.







Wildlife research

A need has arisen for the systematic gaining of knowledge about game, its environment related to the increasing significance of game management as an economic activity and the need of game protection against the increasing pressure of civilisation.

This was the reason for the foundation of the game management department in 1931, which was a part of the Forest Protection Institute in Zbraslav at that time. The director was the outstanding zoologist Prof. Dr. Julius Miloš Komárek. The game management department, institution unparalleled in Europe, was headed by Ing. Jiří Sekera.

Nowadays this activity is not concentrated in one place because of the wide scale of the game management research, but there are a number of workplaces involved in the research, including forestry and agricultural colleges. The most important collaborators of the state administration of game management are The Forestry and Game Management Research Institute, Forest Management Institute, Institute of Forest Ecosystems Research, Central European Institute of Game Ecology, Institute of Ecology and Game Hunting.

The main tasks of wildlife research:

- Survival of game in modified nature conditions.
- The assessment of the landscape environmental functions relating to the game survival.
- The continuous mapping of the most dangerous preparations in term of the health state of the game and transmission of the residues in their food chain.
- Stopping of the decrease of waterfowl population.
- Monitoring of the health state of game as a presumption for creation of genetic base and population management.
- Creation of genetic bank for hare and roe deer in the Czech Republic.
- Perpetuation of endangered game species.
- Monitoring of population of tetraonides, grey partridge, white-coloured red deer and European wild goat.
- Assessment method of intraspecific game relationships and their control.
- Harmonization of the relationship between game and ecosystems.
- Monitoring of the development of game stocks and damage caused by game.
- Periodical assessment of grazing pressure of cloven-hoofed game and rare phytocenosis.
- Support of decision process of the state administration of game management.





Subsidy of game management

The state supports game management through subsidies to several specific activities. In conformity with the Game Management Act and above all the State Budget Act for the year 2005 these are above all:

Contribution for the specific game management activities:

Support of endangered game species

- Releasing of shopped or bred individuals of endangered game species (capercaillie, black grouse, grey partridge) into localities of their natural habitat.
- Purchase or production and installation of man-made burrows.

Game-preserve rearing with rare game species and subspecies (European wild goat, white-coloured red deer).

Creation of feeding fields for the cloven-hoofed game, including seeding, maintenance and renewal in the following years.

Using of birds of prey in plant protection.

- Farm crops protection against rodents.
- Production and installation of nesting boxes, production and arranging of stands for the birds of prey on farmland.

Medicinals as an ingredient of the feed for treatment and prevention of parasitical diseases of the cloven-hoofed game.

Breeding and training of national hound stocks and birds of prey

- Successfully passed field-trial in the same year when the contribution request was submitted; only for the stocks of Czech pointer and Czech terrier.
- Successful breeding of the bird of prey originating from the artificial breed (goshawk, peregrine falcon, saker falcon, golden eagle).

The subsidy of game management is legally laid down by the § 62 of the Game Management Act and the State Budget Act No.675/2004 for the year 2005.

The state supports community associations, in accordance with its subsidiary politics towards non-state and non-profit organisations, in execution of their beneficial communal activities, in their voluntary education of children and young people and in the development of a platform for extracurricular activities of children and young people.

Apart from investing financial contributions in game management, the state supports club game management indirectly as well. The game-keeper clubs, which have a place of residence in the area of the hunting ground, have a priority in the game-tenants selection procedure provided that the present tenant has not expressed an interest in entering the new tenant contract.



The rearing of endangered and rare game species

The white-coloured red deer

There are only several places on our planet, where are reared several individuals with of the white-coloured red deer, an animal with zoological peculiarity. This deer came to Bohemia from Persia some time around the year 1830. The rearing of the white-coloured red deer was very difficult in the following period, therefore the places, where it was reared, has changed several times. The white-coloured red deer was moved into the Žehušice game preserve around the year 1830. Taking into consideration the small number of reared individuals, no wonder that the game has degenerated in the passage of time and the game came to the brink of extinction. As a response to that, a herd of red deer individuals with the original red colouration from the nearby game preserve of Vedralka were released into the Žehušice game preserve, in order to prevent the continuous degeneration of the game. This way it has succeeded in conservation of the white-coloured red deer at the expense of variable colouration in several other individuals. The whole white-coloured red deer population was henceforth controlled by reduction of game population and elimination of sick, weak and colour different individuals with degenerative symptoms. Nowadays, the white-coloured red deer is reared in three game preserves – in the original game preserve Žehušice, in the game preserve Žleby and in the new game preserve Kopidlno u Jičína. In total, approximately 300 individuals of white-coloured red deer are reared in these game preserves.

Capercaillie


Capercaillie is our original game. Its stock has dramatically decreased in the last decades. The reasons of the capercaillie stock decrease are environmental changes caused by intensive forest management, civilization pressure and predacious animals including wild boars. The Ministry of Agriculture and a number of other subjects and individuals are engaged in its conservation rearing. The Ministry of Agriculture has established the ten-year conservation programme for the capercaillie. The Ministry cooperates with the Military Forests and Farms of the Czech Republic, s. e. in the area of Brdy. The conservation rearing is also supported by the Forests of the Czech Republic, s. e. in the area of Hrubý Jeseník and Šumava, Municipal Forests of Domažlice, National Park Šumava and Hunting guild Malý Sněžník. About 120 reared individuals are annually released into the countryside.

Europaen wild goat

The European wild goat is a naturalised game species, which was introduced into the Pálava game preserve in 1953. In the place of its original reproduction the population was reduced to very few pieces. That was the main reason for perpetuation of this game species, which is zoologically allied with the subspecies living in Crete. Taking into account the climatic conditions the European wild goat rearing was very difficult and the increase of young game is low in our territory. The European wild goat rearing in Pálava game preserve was put to an end under pressure of organised nature protection and the game was transported to the game preserve Vříška. Nowadays several individuals of the European wild goat are also reared in the game preserve Volský Žleb. There are about 30 head of this game reared in our country.







Problems related to the game management

The decrease of small game stocks

The most successful period of the Czech game management in the 20th century was based on the rearing of small game. Approximately 17 000 partridges, 662 000 pheasants, 965 000 hares and 80 000 wood pigeons were taken in the Czech and Moravian hunting areas in 1966. Partridges were already not hunted at all in 2004 and it were taken 479 000 pheasants, 46 000 hares, 100 wild rabbits and 19 000 wood pigeons. The higher number of taken pheasants was influenced by artificial rearing and releasing of young pheasants to the countryside. The stocks of the capercaillie cock, black cock and hazel grouse have decreased under the limit enabling us to rear them effectively in the free countryside. The decrease of the small game stocks is connected with sprawling of cultivated areas, intensification of agriculture, implementation of new artificial fertilizers and pesticides. Decrease in the amount of free land arising from a 7% extension of built-up areas together with development of traffic and road system and increasing of tourism in the countryside has also contributed to the declining numbers of the game.

Many of these factors not only persist to the present and in many cases their negative influence is intensifying. This primarily concerns tourism, increase of traffic and increase of stocks of predacious animals. On the other hand implementation of the ecological management in agriculture has helped to improve the environment for small game. The small game is considered to be an indicator of the environment's purity.

The increase of cloven - hoofed game stocks

The cloven - hoofed game has reacted to the environmental changes, which started in the 20th century, by rapid increase of its stocks. Whereas 8 500 heads of red deer, 1000 heads of fallow deer, 750 heads of mouflons, 64 000 heads of roe deer and 3 000 wild boars were taken in the Czech and Moravian hunting areas in 1966, in 2004, 24 000 heads of red deer, 8 500 heads of fallow deer, 6 000 mouflons, 119 000 heads of roe deer and 78 000 wild boars were taken.

The increase of the cloven - hoofed game stocks is influenced by the increase of feed offer that has been caused by development of agriculture, increase of cultivated fields planted with only one crop-plant in one large area, showing little respect for regularities

regarding interrelations between human economic activities carried out in the countryside and natural living requirements of free-living animals. The interest of the hunting public in the increase of number of other game species, as a substitution for decrease of small game stocks, is connected with damage on the forest stands and farm crops.

Anti-hunt propaganda

The fulfilment of game management tasks in the countryside, i.e. creation of a balance between the need for protection of game species, their population and reduction of adverse impacts caused by living style of some game species, is negatively influenced by stirring up of an anti-hunt atmosphere among the layman's public by several ecological organisations. The aim of this anti-hunt propaganda is public condemnation of game management and hunting as such. Their aim is to reduce or exclude this activity from the human economic activities having instilled in the public the feeling that the game management and hunt are only anachronisms.





Game management in the Czech Republic

Published on the occasion of the International exhibition Natura Viva 2005.



Sestavil: oddělení myslivosti MZe ČR a Rembrandt s.r.o. ©2005

Grafická úprava: Leonardo spol. s r.o.

Ilustrace: Jaroslav Béza

Fotografie: Jaromír Zumr st. (4, 8, 36, 37), Jaromír Zumr ml. (36), Barbora Šeplavá (23),
Martin Veselý (6), Eduard Studnička (*ostatní*)



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Published by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic
Těšnov 17, 117 05 Prague 1
Tel.: +420 221 811 111, fax: +420 224 810 478
[http: www.mze.cz](http://www.mze.cz), e-mail: info@mze.cz
ISBN 80-7084-455-8