

Collection of papers from the 4th International Black Grouse Conference

Editorial

In this number of *Folia Zoologica*, collection of eight papers presented at the conference is published. Ursula Nopp-Mayr, from the Institute of Wildlife Biology and Game Management, University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna has done a great job by organizing the 4th International Black Grouse Conference in Vienna September 16th-21st, 2007 and assuming a step forward in the continuity of the European Black Grouse Conference-cycle.

I am sure to be the voice of all participants saying that we congratulate her and her co-operate team for the quality of their organization! 60 enthusiast ‘black grouse’ from 12 countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom) registered for the conference in Vienna.

The number of participants and the number of represented countries demonstrate the concern in black grouse conservation in Europe, while the diversity and topical character of the presentations show the most recent trends and state-of-the-art in black grouse research. A good number of young researchers involved in grouse studies attended the conference with their supervisor, mainly coming from Sweden (with Prof. J. Höglund), Switzerland (with Prof R. Arlettaz) and even Poland this time (with Prof. B. Bobek). Presently the United Kingdom seems to be the most active country in black grouse conservation: seven various contributions and the most numerous representatives presented at the conference, coming from Scotland, England and Wales. From conference to conference, of course the representative numbers from each country vary, pending in respect of the vicinity, the facilities and the fame of the conference location. The Caucasian black grouse was included in the topics of the Black Grouse Conference and we heard a Turkish contribution about this special species. The Alpine situation of black grouse was particularly well represented, too, with emphasis on considering detrimental influences on black grouse habitats such as leisure time tourism, outdoor-sports or building projects like wind parks or chairlifts.

From the 24 contributions finally presented at the conference (21 oral presentations, 3 posters), twelve authors or groups of authors prepared and submitted a paper for the proceedings. One or two referees reviewed each manuscript and I made the last reading, consulting Ursula Nopp-Mayr in case of divergent opinion. Some of the submitted papers had to be strongly revised before publication. Constraints of various natures both sides sadly resulted in the rejection of two manuscripts that were not presented as a scientific paper and could not be revised in time for the publication in *Folia Zoologica*. Otherwise, all authors have adequately considered the comments of the reviewers or justified their position. I have checked their improvements in details and accepted the revised papers. Herewith I would like to thank the authors for their contribution and work and their patience in waiting for the publication.

Being guest editor for the conference proceedings is an honour and a task, but nothing would be well done without a panel of good scientists, each of them ready to review a single or a couple of papers. I warmly thank the grouse colleagues who acted as referees

and invested part of their time in the peer-review process: one half of them did not attend the conference. I also sincerely thank the Editorial Board of *Folia Zoologica* for their final acceptance in publishing the papers in their journal. I hope that this volume will receive a good welcome among the readers and that its diffusion will contribute some way to better management decisions in black grouse conservation.

The European Black Grouse Conference-cycle initiated in September 2000 in Liège (Belgium) goes on: Michal Kazsuba announced in Vienna that the 5th conference will be held in Poland and Jacob Höglund proposed to host the 6th conference in Sweden in 2011. Exact date and location of the 5th conference are now known: October 5th-9th, 2009 in Białowieża, Poland. The organizer is the Polish Society for Birds Protection (PTOP) or *Polskie Towarzystwo Ochrony Ptaków*. The contact person is Anna Suchowolec and the registration is open since December 2008 (e-mail: blackgrouse@ptop.org.pl). Hopefully many scientists and interested persons will catch this opportunity to visit the Białowieża Region in Poland and decide to participate in the 5th European Black Grouse Conference, providing a wide and stimulating forum of discussion...

Michèle Loneux
Guest Editor for the Proceedings