

Observations on the social behavior in Polish Konik foals including of social ranking of their mothers

S u m m a r y

In the study conducted on pasture of Research Station of Organic Agriculture and Conservation Breeding of Animals, Polish Academy of Sciences in Popielno during August and September 2001, 11 mares and 9 foals were used. The behavior of horses was registered daily, for 28 days, 6 hours a day with 2 hours break. Observations were performed between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. The analysis included the following factors: herd hierarchy, social structure of herd, social drive and strongly connected with it-the need of protecting the offspring. Observations indicated, that process of creating social system in horse herds is very complex. On the example of behavior of Polish Konik foals you can say, that some behavioral features of their mothers, especially domination and submission, are transferred to the offspring. It exerts a great effect on creating dependence in a herd and on appearance of a herd leader. In case of both mares and foals a tendency was observed to spend time with specific individuals and to avoid others. Observations indicated also, that foals create the same pairs as their mothers did.