

Magdalena Łuczyńska, Zbigniew Jaworski, Barbara Stolarczyk

Behavior of Polish Konik horses kept in reservation breeding system

S u m m a r y

The purpose of the studies was to analyze the behavior of sires being herd leaders and their relations with other herd members. The study was carried out in 4 groups - herds of horses (42 horses in total) living on the territory of the SB PAN Popielno reserve. The herds were observed for 4 months (October 2006 - January 2007) and moreover three behavioral experiments were performed. The results show strong family bond between sires, mares and offspring. All sires demonstrated characteristic reactions which confirm their territorial behavior, e.g. guarding and marking their territory. The behavioral tests proved that the sires reacted typically both to real and potential danger, showed courage and interest to surrounding environment. They show clearly their dominant position in the herd and are able to hold the control over all its members.