

Temporal variability of concentrations and habitat preferences  
of hares under the conditions of a hunting district, in the years  
1998-2008

S u m m a r y

Studies on the population and habitat preferences of hares were carried out in the spring seasons of 1998 and 1999, and of 2007 and 2008. The studies were conducted based on the method of belt assessment, within the territory of field hunting district constituting the Game Breeding Centre of the Polish Hunting Association in Wierzchowiska near Lublin. In the first period of the studies, mean hare population density was at the level of ca. 23 individuals per 100 ha, and was similar to population density of that species in other regions of the country at that time. Between the periods under the study, the population density index decreased more than 3 times, and in certain regions of the district - even 6 times, and in the final year of the study, the mean hare population density for the district was found on the level of 5.5 individuals per 100 ha. With the change in hare population density, between the periods under study there occurred a shift in the habitat preferences of hares. In the first period of the study, with higher population density, the most preferred type of habitat was arable soil, which could have been the result of the highest percentage share of the mentioned land type in the structure of agricultural lands within the area under study. With the decrease in hare population density there took place a change in the habitat preferences towards lands classified as fallow. In the final period of the study, the index of habitat preferences for that type of lands was the highest of all, at 0.59.