SPACING PATTERNS AND ANNUAL RANGE USE OF CAPERCAILLIE AND BLACK GROUSE IN PRISTINE TAIGA FOREST

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We compare movements and habitat utilization of capercaillie and black grouse on an annual basis in Pinega State Reserve. In both species the birds occurred in separate subpopulations with little overlap and with the lek arena as the centre of yearly activity. In both species males stayed closer to the lek year around than did females. A single lek population of cocks used an annual home range of approximately 40 km^2 compared to 50 km^2 for females. Both cocks and hens showed great site fidelity and returned to the same seasonal habitats in consecutive years. Mean distance between cock locations during two consecutive days was approximately 400 m for capercaillie. This is probably best explained as an anti-predation behavior. Density and distribution of black grouse and capercailie are related to landscape features on a large scale and to forest composition on a small scale.

THE POPULATION DYNAMICS OF FINNISH LYNXES – FROM PERIL TO TRIUMPH

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The Finnish population of Eurasian lynxes Lynx lynx has gone through significant changes during only a bit over 100 years. Lynxes

were extirpated from Finland around 1930´s and 1940´s. The species was protected from hunting in year 1962 and from thereon the population has been increasing. For a while in 1990´s the population size was stable but in recent years we have witnessed a rapid growth in lynx numbers. The current minimum population estimate is around 1905 – 2060 lynxes before the onset of hunting season 2009/2010. The reasons behind the downhill and the rapid recovery of the lynx population will be discussed, especially in relation to hunting and prey populations.

ABUNDANCE DYNAMICS OF GEESE ON SPRING PASSAGE IN THE MIDDLE COURSE OF THE OKA RIVER IN 1956-2009

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Spring migrations of birds, including Anseriformes, in the middle course of the Oka have been monitored since 1956, and since 1998 the number of birds feeding and resting in the floodplain has been counted periodically 2-4 times in a season. The surveys cover the territory stretching for 60 km along the Oka channel (about 10 500 ha). The monitoring procedure includes daily registration of all birds within sight of the observer within 4 morning hours. Observations continue for one and a half months, from April 1 to May 15. According to counts from the lookout site (LS), an overall upward trend in goose abundance persists in the middle course of the Oka. However, the bird numbers registered at LS in the 2000s are much lower than in the 1990s. A contradictory picture is generated by the comparison of the number of geese sighted at LS and those feeding in the Oka floodplain (within the same time interval). According to observations at LS the number of