limit of the species' constant presence in the region is the Timan Ridge. The territories immediately adjoining the ridge's northern macroslope (Ust-Tsilemsky, Izhemsky, Ukhtinsky, Sosnogorsky, Troitsko-Pechyorsky Districts, Komi Republic) form the periphery of the range, where unstable local groups of the predator occasionally form. Further north-eastwards, few visits mainly by solitary individuals may be noted. The animals occur both in the flatland Ural region (right- and left-side banks of Pechora, basins of rivers Kozhva (R. Entyush'yu), Lyzha, Kozhym, Kos'yu, Bolshaya Inta, Bolshaya Rogovaya (R. Ruch'yu), Usa (itself and R. Kechpel')) and in the mountains of Circumpolar (basins of rivers Shchuger (R. Bolshoi Patok), Bolshaya Synya (R. Vojvozh-Synya)) and Polar (basins of rivers Lemva (R. Yun'yakha), Yelets (itself and R. Kharuta)) Urals. The results of interviews and questionnaires suggest the animals may sometimes cross the Ural Ridge. In the tundra zone (Nenetsky Autonomous District), two individuals were sighted in the upper course of the Adz'va River, about 50 km SW from Vashutkiny Lakes in December 2005.

RANGE AND ABUNDANCE DYNAMICS OF MAMMALS IN THE URAL AREA: PROBLEMS OF HUNTING AND RARE SPECIES CONSERVATION

N.S. Korytin, V.N. Bolshakov

Institute of Plant and Animal Ecology, Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Science, Ekaterinburg, Russia.

The report presents the results of research into the range and abundance dynamics of hunted and rare mammals in the Ural region.

1. Industrial development of the region began around 400 years ago, and has been very intensive in the past 100-150 years. Substantial changes have taken place in ecosystems during this period. Influence of the main anthropogenic factors is discussed in the report.

2. The ranges of several mammal species have decreased over the past 100-150 years, 1 subspecies and 1 species disappeared from the Ural fauna – European beaver (*Castor fiber pohlei*) and red deer (*Cervus elaphus*). Presence of European mink is questionable –no reliable evidence has lately been discovered. The ranges of reindeer, wolverine and sable have shrunk sharply. Such species as moose and roe deer have extended their range to forest steppe, which was not typical for them 150 years ago. The numbers of beaver (another subspecies), sable, pine marten and red fox notably increased after fur economy collapse some 15 years ago.

3. Species abundances, biodiversity, anthropogenic impact on ecosystems were studied in five areas in Mid Urals which have similar landscape, climate and vegetation characteristics. Drawing upon this analysis measures are proposed to make hunting sustainable and to conserve rare species.

GADWALL BREEDING IN LENINGRAD REGION

S.A. Kouzov, A.V. Kravchuk

Bird Ecology and Conservation Laboratory, St. Petersburg State University

In the mid-20th century, the only occasion of Gadwall (Anas strepera L.) nesting was reported from Rakovye Lakes in 1966 (Molis, 1967). The main wave of dispersal began in the 1990s and proceeded along the Gulf of Finland southern coast via Kurgalsky Peninsula, where solitary birds appeared regularly in 1988-1994. In 1995, we observed 9 breeding occasions on the peninsula western coast; further on, we found 10 to 24 clutches there every year. In 1997, Gadwall started breeding on Seskar Island. Today, Gadwall is a common breeder at the Neva Bay, on Kotlin Island, at Lahtinsky and Sestroretsky Razliv*s*, on Beryozovye Islands, on islands and shores of the Vyborg Bay, and at