in the system of ravines and gullies. The bulk of the burrows were found in sandy and loamy sand soils. Some burrows are located in the pits where firewood was burnt for coal in the past. Settlements are aged from 4-5 to 100 years and more.

The badger prefers broad-leaved forests (oak, lime, maple-ash forests), mixed coniferous-broadleafed forests (pine-oak forests) and mixed forests, more rarely – pine forests. All settlements are situated in immediate proximity to a water source (no more than 1 km). The area of settlements ranges from 200 to 3000 m^2. The number of entrance holes in one settlement varies from 3 to 12 (average 5-6).

BLACK GROUSE HABITATS IN BOREAL FORESTS (BASED ON RADIO-TAGGING)

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Black Grouse (*Lyrurus tetrix*) tagging and tracking was carried out in Pinezhsky reserve in the period from 2004 to 2008. As the result, we found 677 sites where males stayed in different seasons, and 242 sites where females with broods and non-breeding females were present.

Special focus was on such poorly studied parameters of Black Grouse ecology as assessment of the predation pressure, mortality among birds of different sex and age, estimation of breeding success and brood survival on different years. In addition, we determined how far males and females depart from the lekking site after the breeding season. We managed to identify bird movements during a year and got more accurate information about the birds' loyalty to their leks. Effort was taken to describe habitats which contained males, females with broods and non-breeding females. Distinctions were found between cocks and hens in preferences for different forest types.

The locations of the birds changed in summertime. After staying in bilberry spruce forests along mire margins, close to the lekking site in May and June, Blackcocks in July-August were mainly sighted in dense middle-aged pine-spruce-birch stands formed in the area burnt in 1937. In mid-August, as bilberry ripened, they started moving back to sparser bilberry spruce forests. Males could be seen in flocks all year round, but the number of sightings in flocks was the greatest in the winter season. Females were always encountered in young dense stands, but showed more preference for sites with a higher proportion of birch than males. We have never recorded the presence of other individuals nearby.

According to radio-tracking data, raptors were the cause of a significant mortality rate among adult Black Grouse. The predation pressure is the highest in winter months.

DYNANICS OF GROUSE NUMBERS IN POKROVSKOYE HUNTING FACILITY, VLADIMIR REGION

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Dynamics of grouse abundance was investigated in Petushinsky District of Vladimir Region in the territory of Pokrovskoye hunting facility from December 2008 to December 2009.

Results of four transect counts, two counts with a decoy, counts of Capercaillie and Black Grouse in leks were analysed. Transect counts covered more than 170 km, and 14 Capercaillie, 30 Black Grouses, 67 Hazel Grouse were registered there.

In the last two years (2008 and 2009), the numbers of Capercaillie and Black Grouse have considerably declined. Capercaillie abundance (vs. 2007) decreased by 57 %, Black Grouse abundance – by 47 %. Hazel Grouse numbers, on the contrary, grew by about 50 % in comparison with 2005 (data from winter transect counts).