

Install and promote a systematic hunting bag data collection:

A new hunting notebook: The French hunters' experience



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An old question but always hunting problematic:

What is the hunting bag per species?

Hunting bag statistic knowledge is an essential requirement for a sustainable use of quarry species. If the hunting bag for some species is accurately evaluated like roe-deers, wild boars, red deers or izzards, for many other species it is more or less unknown, in particular for migratory quarry birds species.

Aims of study

- To have a consistent hunting bag for each species,
- To develop new technologies (Internet, optic reading, PDA) for hunters and hunter's associations,
- To provide each hunter with an annual teaching and information notebook on specie's sustainable management.

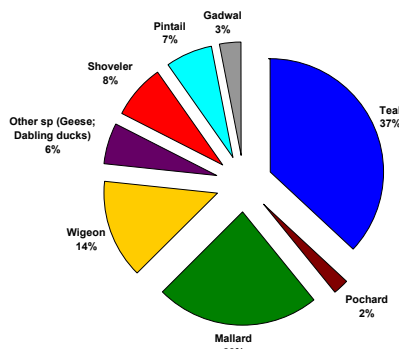
Why is the hunting bag important?

Hunting bag data help improve the general knowledge of quarry species and contribute to a better management. Also this data is important to evaluate the minimum size of population. NGO like Wetland International or BirdLife do a very important work on periodical bird population counts however many examples show a better estimate when hunting bag is known: Jack snipe (*Limnocyptes minimus*) is a perfect example. For all these reasons, systematic standardized collected hunting bag data must be encouraged in the hunting association.

An experience: "Hutte¹" notebook

Since 2004, a night hunting notebook (15 120 spots distributed in 27 French departments) is obligatory in France (*). This data collection procedure is singular since it centralises the overall bag data associated with this hunting method.

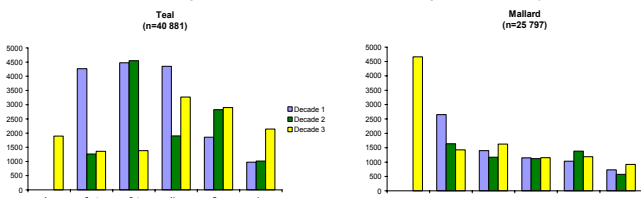
Night hunting bag (%) of Wildfowl in 2004-2005



Six species on the 14 studied are mainly shot in France during night hunting (92,1% of total bag)



Decade distribution of night hunting bag (raw data) for Teal and Mallard (hunting season period in 2004-2005: 28 August – 31 January)



Knowledge of hunting bag per decade can help to apprehend period of flyway and become a valid tool for birds quarry management.

Others results :

- An Average of 43 birds / hutte are shot
- An Average of 0,27 bird per potential hunting night are shot (n=159 night hunting in 2004-2005)
- 21,1 % of the overall time is spent in the huttes



¹ : Hutte : it's a hunting spot for generally 2 to 6 hunters that is located in a wetland.
² : Night hunting is legal in France for waterfowl species in 27 departments.

A new ambitious pilot project!

➡ Extension and Generalization of hunting bag collection data

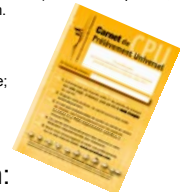
Strategy:

Supply all French hunters with a pocketbook where they will write down all of their shootings.

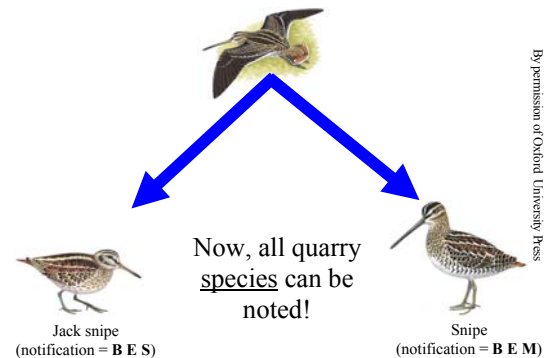
How?

Creation of a universal booklet (« CPU = Carnet de Prélèvement Universel ») where all species, hunting territories and hunting methods are assigned to a coding system.

- Instructions for use are simple and clear;
- All legal quarry species are coded;
- Memo for species of a same family like thrushes or geese;
- Rules of hunting safety;
- Compatible with optic reading;
- Creation of a website for this project.



A new data collect system: Before, just « Snipes » were collected



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The innovative principle of this pilot project is to have a unique and easy document collecting the data of hunter's annual season using a coded system. The recording and collecting of the hunting bag data is innovative in Europe.

Hunting associations will benefit and enjoy a standard tool which allows many statistics and thus contributes to promote sustainable hunting.

In 2006, 40 000 notebook CPU were experimented on pilot territories.

Discussion and perspectives

"Hutte" notebook experience demonstrates the importance and necessity to develop for all the species and especially migratory species a really good knowledge of the hunting bag. In this way, annual monitoring can define with precision several indicators like bird flyways or presence / absence of species spatially and / or temporally. With the extension to all hunters and all hunting methods, the "CPU" will become in the next year one of the most important wildlife data bank, essential for a rational management of quarry species.

In a wider context, European project "ARTEMIS" piloted by FACE and presented in Athens in 2006 at the European Conference Bird Hunting Data is completely in agreement with the French approach. Thus, likely in 2008, France will present complete and original hunting bag statistics.

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