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Preface

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PREFACE

The 10th International Grouse Symposium was held during 26 September - 3 October 2005 at Luchon in the majestic Pyrenean Mountains of France. Congratulations to Emmanuel Ménoni and Claude Novoa of the Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage for their professional organisation of a widely appreciated symposium. As in the past, the conference was truly international, attended by 163 scientists from 24 countries of Europe, Asia and North America. Presentations included 50 oral communications and 77 posters, resulting in 29 manuscripts being submitted for possible publication in the proceedings of this special issue of WILDLIFE BIOLOGY. I selected 27 papers for peer review by at least two referees, with a third or fourth referee being consulted in case of divergent opinions. On the basis of the referees' comments, I accepted 13 papers, after consulting Jon Swenson, Deputy Editor-in-Chief, and Anne Loison, Editor-in-Chief. Our decision to reject several interesting manuscripts was painful, but we trust that the comments of the referees will allow the authors to improve and eventually publish their results. We sincerely thank all the referees who contributed their valuable time to the review process.

The first paper of these proceedings reports on the worldwide status and threats to grouse, followed by an article detailing the situation of the Caucasian black grouse in Turkey. Loss of suitable habitats is the main threat to grouse, which probably explains why the next eight texts treat studies of habitats at the landscape or local scale. These include a landscape model based largely on soil conditions and climate for identifying both habitats currently used by capercaillie and those that would be suitable if management practices were changed. In the next paper, a landscape approach is also used to study niche partitioning by the lesser prairie-chicken and the ring-necked pheasant. The following two articles concern studies of specific habitats resulting in management guidelines applicable over wide geographic areas, namely recommendations for nesting and brood rearing habitats of sage-grouse and a tree stocking guide for ruffed grouse resulting from an analysis of forest stands at drumming sites. The next paper discusses the little-known establishment of capercaillie leks, mostly small, in young forest. The last three habitat papers treat selection of nest sites in Chinese grouse, selection of winter night roosts in capercaillie and the new technique of GPS satellite telemetry for studying grouse movements. Population biology is the subject of the final three articles, which concern causes of mortality, including fence collisions, in lesser prairie-chickens, effects of weather on fluctuations in hazel grouse numbers and the relevance of survival and reproductive rates to black grouse recovery programmes.

We hope that these proceedings will contribute in some small way to the worldwide conservation of grouse, their habitats and the associated wildlife.

Laurence N. Ellison
Special Editor for the Proceedings

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