

Editorial

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Editorial

Mother Earth and all the guardian spirits smiled at the 8th International Grouse Symposium held in Rovaniemi in September 1999. It was hard to believe that we were actually on the Arctic Circle; the weather was warm and sunny just as in the summer time, only the bright colours of autumn revealed the true season. On behalf of all the Symposium hosts in Finland, I would like once again to thank all the participants for creating a relaxed and cheerful Symposium in Finnish Lapland.

Scientific symposia are fora for scientific thoughts and exchange of opinions. Typically, many ideas presented in symposia will never be verified due to their 'wild' nature or the absurdity of collecting relevant data. The latter point is extremely valid in grouse studies; many species exist at so low densities or are so difficult to catch that even the most prudent ideas suffer from inadequacy of data. We have selected the presentations to be published in these Proceedings with scientific rigour, but we have also tried to make use of the unique opportunity offered by a gathering of advanced scientists from all over the world. All the manuscripts have been refereed by two prominent scientists, half of which did not participate in the Symposium. Dr Pekka Helle and I - as the Editor-in-Chief of WILDLIFE BIOLOGY - finally decided, which articles would be included in the Proceedings published in this issue of WILDLIFE BIOLOGY. It is always difficult to draw the separating line, and there will always be authors, who will disagree with the decision - often with some justification. But if you want to put blame on someone, put it on me, because Dr Pekka Helle - Special Editor of the Proceedings - has done a marvellous job in collecting all the papers, finding the referees, and taking care of the final editing. Thank you, Pekka, for your wonderful contribution. Editing work is very laborious and seldom rewarding, at least officially.

These Proceedings will be published in due time (thanks again to Pekka), and consist of many outstanding contributions. Three articles are printed in the *Rendez-vous* forum, because they, according to the definition of WILDLIFE BIOLOGY, deal with enthusiastic ideas and expressions of opinion which may lack firm basis. Abstracts of oral and poster presentations of the Symposium are available at our website: www.wildlifebiology.com

The Grouse Symposium in Finland proved to be a success, the grouse biologists proved to be true scientists, and the tradition of getting together is a necessity also in the future.

Harto Lindén
Organiser of the Symposium
Editor-in-Chief of WILDLIFE BIOLOGY