

Big game hunting in Spain has increased in the last 30 years

Game has always been considered a scarce natural resource. For this reason, a team of researchers at the Polytechnic University of Madrid and the Centre for Forestry Research have carried out a study on these practices in the last 35 years which demonstrates that, despite the fact that the total number of hunters in Spain has fallen along with the number of open access territories, big game is on the rise.

SINC

5/6/2013 09:47 CEST



The rise in big game at times reaches semi-domestication and can result in damages. / [Alejo Concheso Calvo](#)

Since ancient times, the pressures of excessive hunting have contributed to the gradual decline of wildlife populations and even the extinction of certain species in many areas.

Researchers from the Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM) and the Centre

for Forestry Research (INIA-CIFOR) have studied the developments in big game in Spain between 1972 and 2007 to gain an understanding of the hunting trends of the last decades.

"We have analysed the general trends in official statistics on hunters, hunting weapons, hunting grounds and captures. Our main conclusion is that the number of big game hunters has increased even though the total number of hunters has fallen," as María Martínez, researcher at the Centre for Forestry Research and co-author of the study, explains to SINC.

The paper also reveals that the number of open access game reserves has decreased in favour of a proliferation of territories in which captures are controlled.

"We know that this rise in big game captures has been accompanied by significant transformations in a series of factors related to supply and demand"

"We know that this rise in big game captures has been accompanied by significant transformations in a series of factors related to supply and demand: families' higher purchasing power, a greater number of urban hunters away from the countryside who pursue big game and trophy hunting, abandonment of farming activity and livestock rearing, technological advances, restocking and releases.

All of this contributes to the creation of more and more fenced territories dedicated to the practice, often more intensively," notes Martínez.

Hunting rises in line with economic interests

Another of this study's conclusions is that the development of game as an economic good can be explained by the parameters that govern the market. As such, from 1972 to 1989, the most significant motivating factor for the rise in captures was the reduction in open access to game and its replacement by increased control over the use of these areas for commercial hunting. Subsequently, from 1989 to 2007, big game hunting grew mostly due to a rise in demand propelled by the greater interest of urban-dwelling tourists in these kinds of activities.

“However, the rise in big game at times reaches semi-domestication and can result in damages, for example to crops or difficulties with the natural regeneration of vegetation species. To obtain sustainable levels for the capture of big game and their populations, it is essential that those in charge are aware of these damages. At the same time, it is advisable to recognise the positive opportunities generated by hunting activity,” the researcher concludes.

References:

A. C. Herruzo, M. Martinez-Jauregui. “Trends in hunters, hunting grounds and big game harvest in Spain” *Forest Systems* 22(1): 114-122, 2013.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5424/fs/2013221-03371>

Copyright: **Creative Commons**

TAGS

CINEGÉTICA | CAZA MAYOR | FAUNA SILVESTRE | CAZA | FORESTAL |
CAZADOR | CAPTURAS |

Creative Commons 4.0

You can copy, distribute and transform the contents of SINC. [Read the conditions of our license](#)