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Seasonal home range shift of red deer hinds, Cervus elaphus: are there feeding reasons?
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This work shows records of seasonal home range shift of radio collared red deer hinds (Cervus elaphus L., 1758) in southern Hungary from a forested block to the surrounding agricultural area every June between 1994-2000. Better quality of agricultural than forest forages is suggested as the main reason for this shift. Two hypotheses were tested: i) red deer consume mainly cultivated plants in the agricultural area ii) agricultural plants are more nutritious than those in the forest at the time of home range shifting. Composition of forest and agricultural diet was determined by microhistological faeces analysis and the nutritive quality was assessed by the amount of crude protein and crude fibre content. Red deer diet was dominated by browse in the forest (65-85%) whilst, in agricultural fields, wood species were as important as grasses (26-44 and 39-55%, respectively). Consumption of cultivated plants was low (under 10%) in the agricultural area. Nutritive quality of the diet was lower at the agricultural site than in the forest due to lower crude protein and higher crude fibre content. Seasonal home range shift of red deer hinds therefore, could not be explained by better nutritive quality of agricultural plants only. We suggest other factors that could potentially explain this behavior.

vadgazdálkodás
vadökológia
Megjegyzések

diet composition, habitat change, nutritive quality, faeces analysis, forest-agriculture habitat

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