

**WORKSHOP**

**How to release partridges for conservation  
and shooting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Chairs: Dr. Carlos Sánchez-García & Dr. Francis Buner

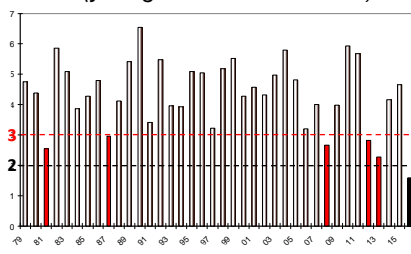
**Conciliating releases & hunting  
of the Grey partridge  
and the conservation of wild populations in France**

Elisabeth BRO, François REITZ & Bernard MAUVY  
French National Hunting & Wildlife Agency (ONCFS)

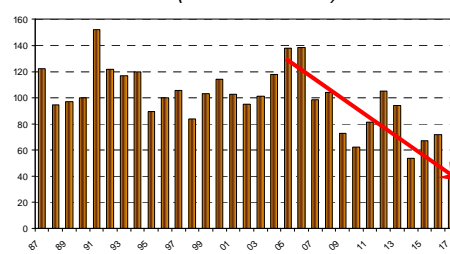
**Recent decline of wild populations**

**Cascading series of (very) bad reproductions these last few years  
→ decrease of spring densities**

**Reproductive success**  
(young / female in summer)



**Index of spring density**  
(100% in 1990)



→ Releases in some hunting estates

See Poster n°68 (REITZ & BRO)

## Releases for hunting & conservation

### Releases just before shooting parties

(« put-and-take » releases, mostly in areas where no wild populations)

### Summer releases (August)

#### ↳ for conservation

temporary suspension of hunting (when releases / 3-5 years)

#### ↳ for hunting & conservation

hunting allowed during release years

**Are conservation purposes achieved  
as thought & claimed by hunters?**

3/8

## Releases for hunting & conservation?

### Field & research feedback:

↳ partridges: poor survival / lower reproductive success

#### ↳ hunters:

- regular bags
- not encouraged to manage wild pop & habitat

↳ hunting: potential of overhunting in the absence of limiting rule

4/8

## Risk of overhunting the wild population

### Released birds in the bag

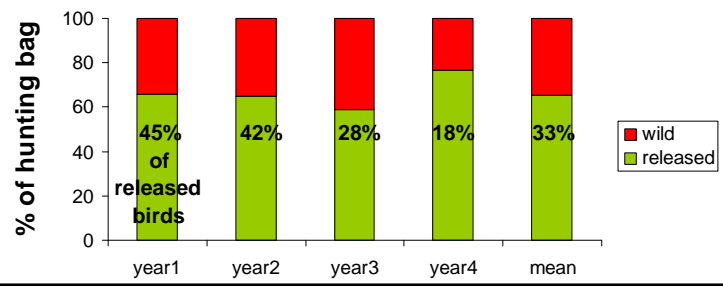
### Survey of hunting bag (Mauvy et al. 1992)

- Hunting estate: 1 300 ha, 60-70 hunters
- wild pop. of grey partridges: 1-3 pairs / km<sup>2</sup>, declining)

Released birds (N):	192	212	192	256	856
Hunting bag (N):	135	139	92	60	426
released birds (%):	66	65	59	77	65.5



**no rule to limit the bag**

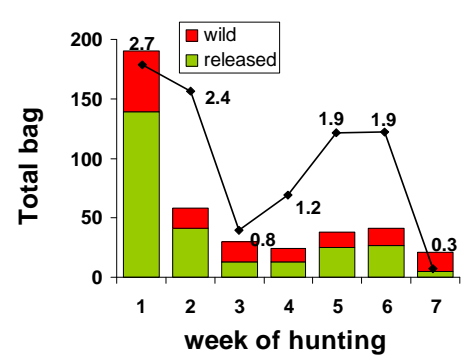


## Risk of overhunting wild birds

### Weekly bag

### Survey of hunting bag (Mauvy et al. 1992)

- Hunting estate: 1 300 ha, 60-70 hunters
- wild pop. of grey partridges: 1-3 pairs / km<sup>2</sup>, declining)



60% of the bag shot the first 2 weeks  
ratio **released** / **wild** birds (-♦-) decreases

Releases did not prevent the population from declining

## Conciliating grey partridge hunting and conservation of wild populations

- Survey of estates with releases to identify sustainable practices  
(*hunting circumstances & rules*)

### **Options to limit hunting wild birds when releases are practiced:**

- Hunting conspicuously tagged hand-reared birds
- Limit hunting to a few days after the Opening  
(*already existing practice in some estates where wild pop is managed*)
- Stop hunting after a quota of wild birds is reached