**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?

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

- Hunting estate: 1 300 ha, 60-70 hunters
- Wild pop. of grey partridges: 1-3 pairs / km², declining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Released birds (N):</th>
<th>192</th>
<th>212</th>
<th>192</th>
<th>256</th>
<th>856</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hunting bag (N):</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>released birds (%)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Risk of overhunting the wild population**

- Released birds in the bag

**No rule to limit 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 / km², declining

**Weekly bag**

- 60% of the bag shot the first 2 weeks
- Ratio released / wild birds decreases

**Risk of overhunting wild birds**

- Releases did not prevent the population from declining
Conciliating grey partridge hunting and conservation of wild populations

- Survey of estates with releases to identity 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