

THE FEED SELECTION OF ROE DEER (*CAPREOLUS CAPREOLUS*) ON AGRICULTURAL HABITAT IN WINTER AND SPRING

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Roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) are Hungary's most common large herbivores. The feeding strategies of roe deer have been examined in many European countries and the researchers have underlined the importance of the plant abundance (TIXIER AND MTSAL, 1997; MÁTRAI AND MTSAL, 1986; FEHÉR AND MTSAL, 1988). The key factor of feed is not the quality but its abundance (TIXIER AND DUNCAN, 1996; TIXIER AND MTSAL, 1997; 1998). There is an opinion that the ancient habitat of roe deer used to be green wood and woody steppe. They preferred leafy forests, forest edges and the agricultural cultivated areas which are situated next to them. They rarely occurred on big plains without tree cover. Due to the calmness of large-scale agriculture roe deer spread all over the Great Hungarian Plain, afforestation also helped in improving the habitat. The adaptation of roe deer to agricultural environment was so good that today we separate the forest and plain ecotypes. The two ecotypes have big differences in behavior, relationship and feeding habits (CSÁNYI, 1992).

The goal of my research is to find out more about the differences in feeding habits and attributes related to them. The plant composition of feed depends on the vegetation of the habitat.

The quality of the feed is one of the most important factors, which influence the density of the roe deer population, the body- and antler weight and the reproductive performance not only at young but also at older age groups. The autumn condition of doe (MAJZINGER, 2007) shows the quality of the living area.

In my research I am trying to find answers to the following questions:

1. what was the composition of feed by roe deer shot on two hunting territories with different conditions in the autumn-winter and the spring-summer hunting seasons?
2. what kind of effect do the main feed components have on the body mass, and in spring and summer on the antler weight of examined roe deer?

Kulcsszavak: téli és tavaszi táplálék összetétel, őz, *Capreolus capreolus*

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