



The B.E.A.R.S. Project: Bear Education, Awareness and Research in Slovakia

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SWS – Slovak Wildlife Society

*Spoločnosť pre výskum, vzdelávanie a
spolužitie s prírodou*

www.slovakwildlife.org | www.medvede.sk

Slovak Wildlife Society

- NGO
- Focus on large carnivores
- Established in 1998



10 Years' Experience of Conservation and Research Work on Large Carnivores

Slovak Wildlife Society

- Damage prevention
- Carnivore tourism
- Research
- Management
- Education
- Public awareness



Conflict mitigation



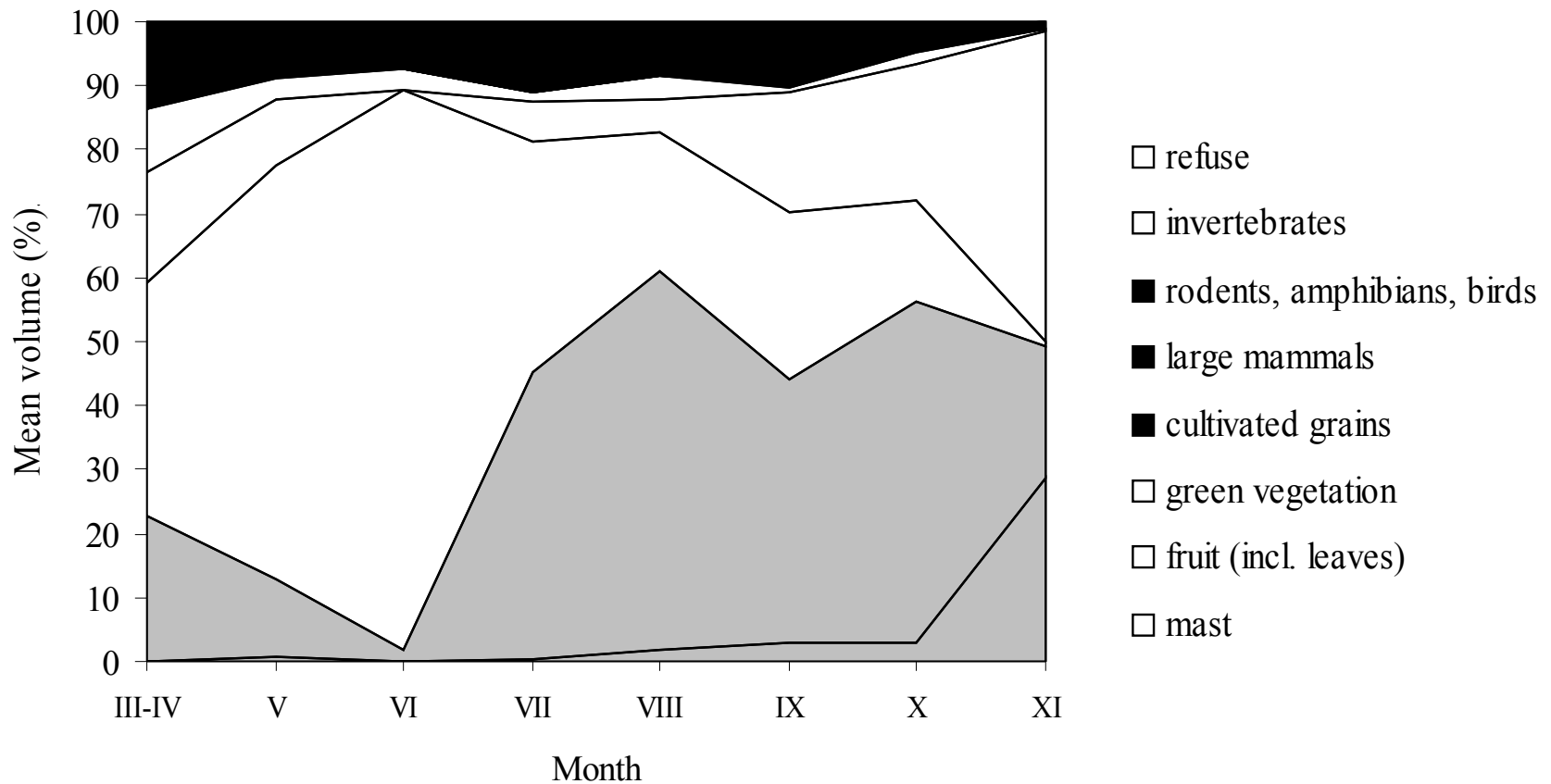
Carnivore-based ecotourism



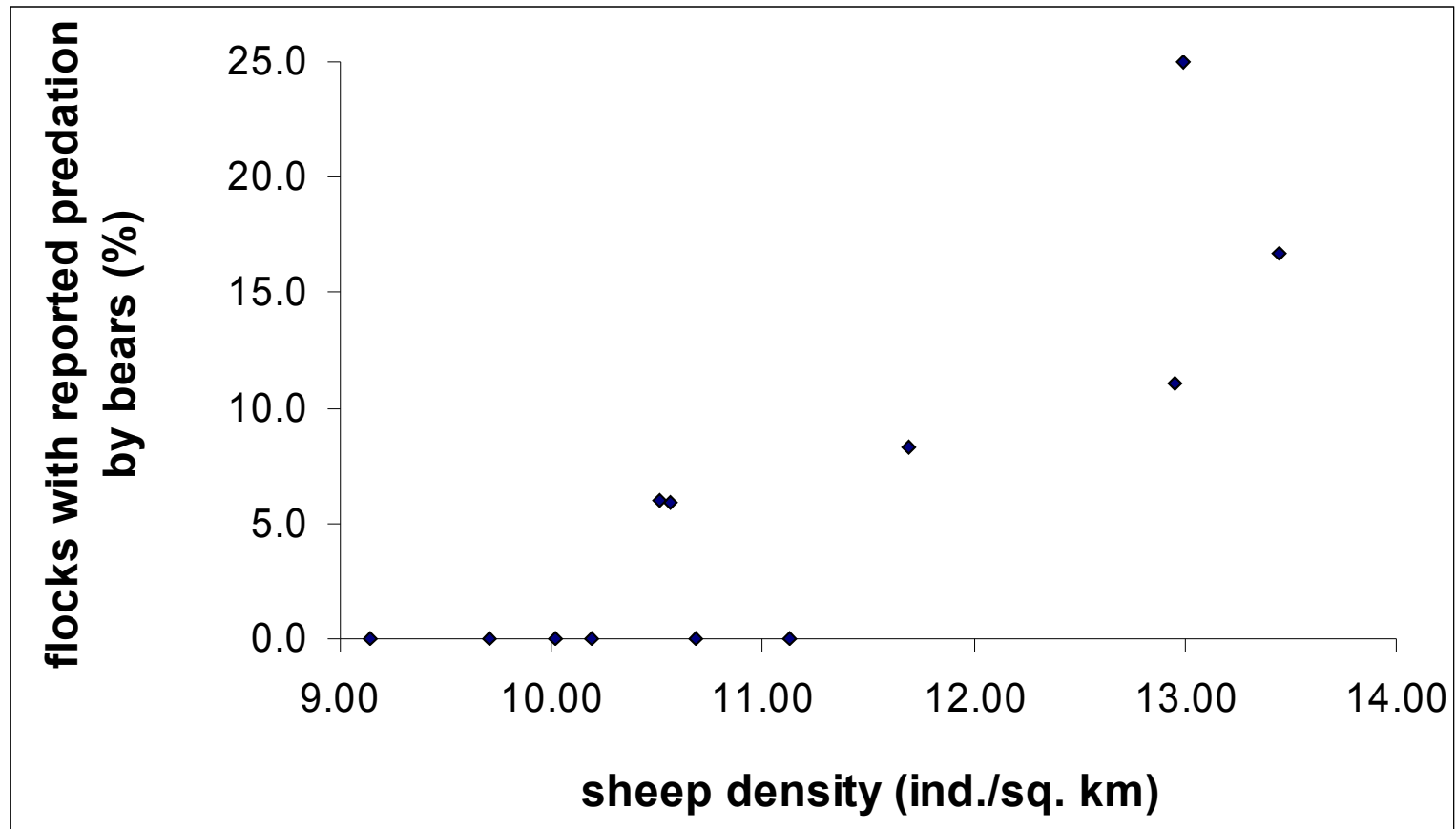
Carnivore-based ecotourism



Ecological studies



Research on damage

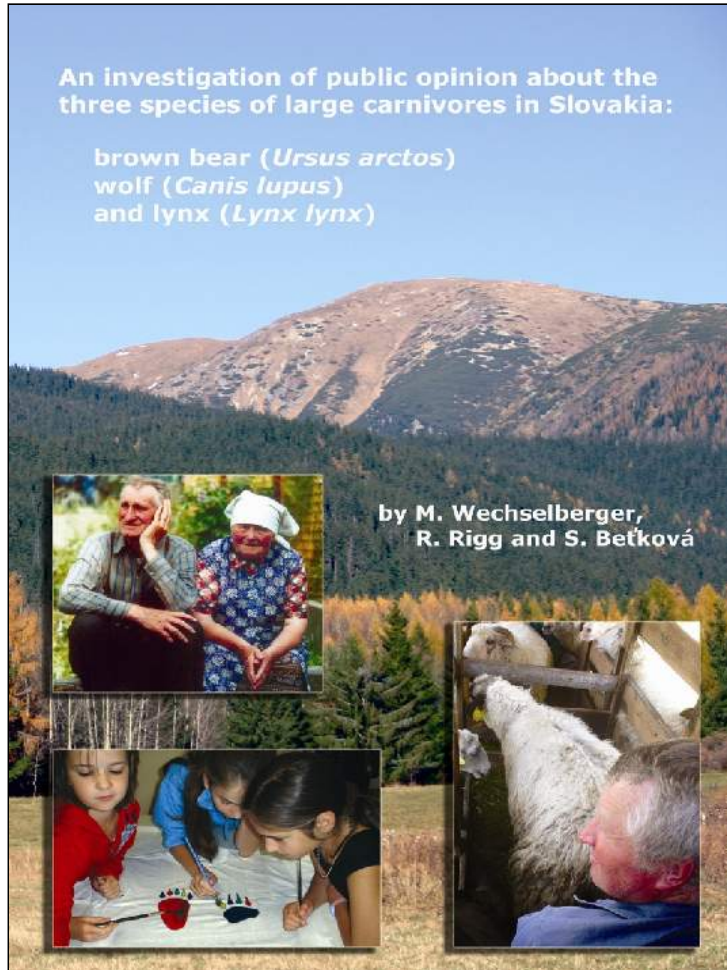


The B.E.A.R.S. Project

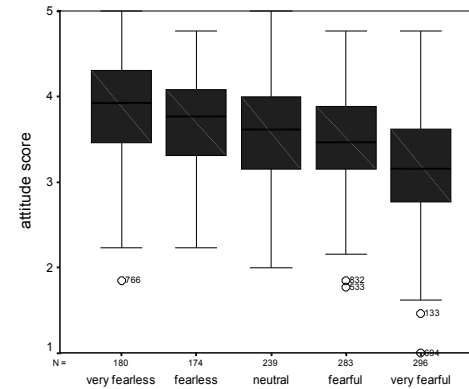
- Education
- Awareness
- Research



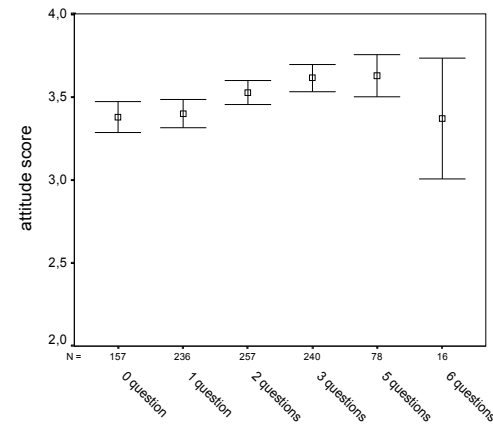
Public opinion



Attitude vs. fear



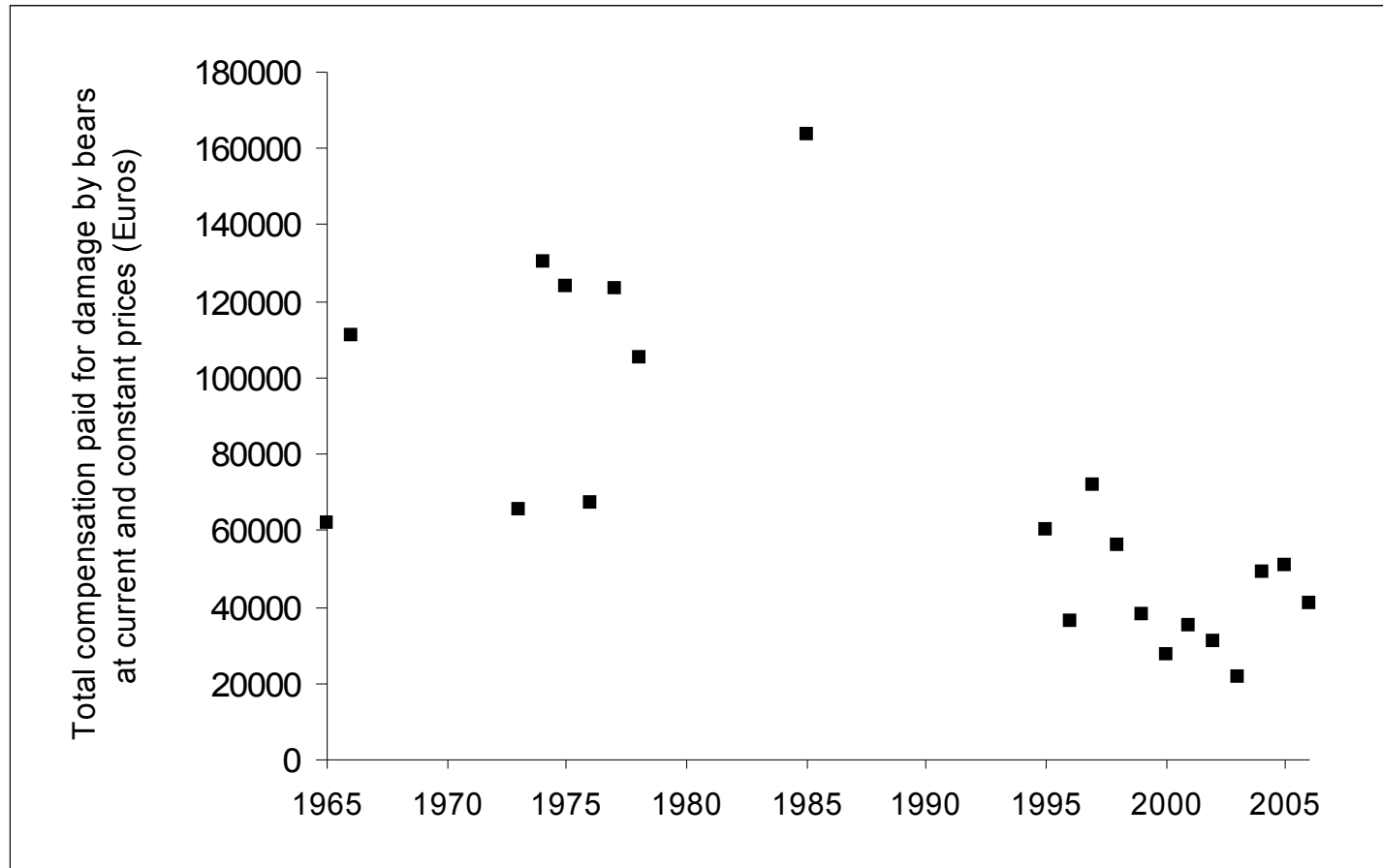
Attitude vs. knowledge



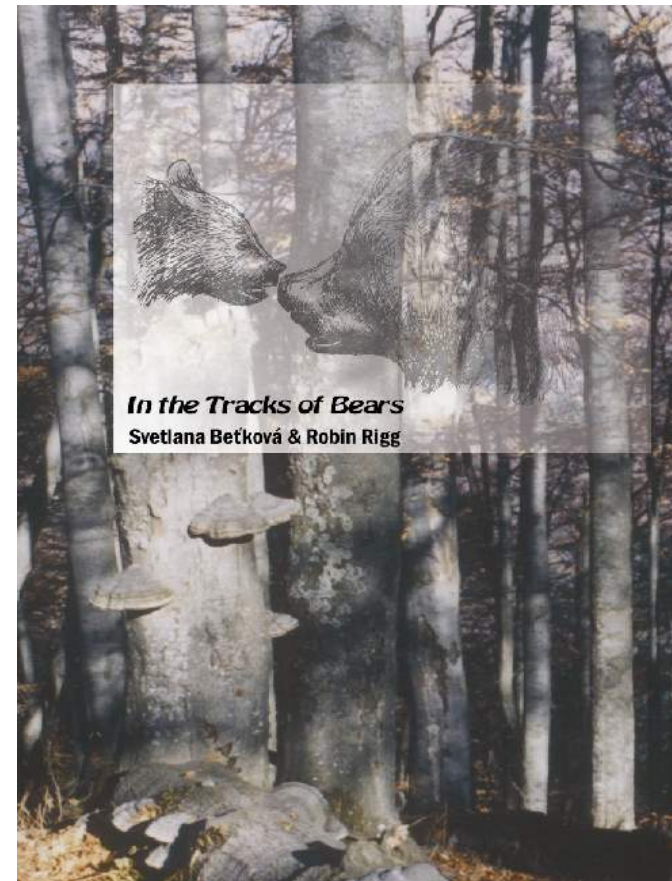
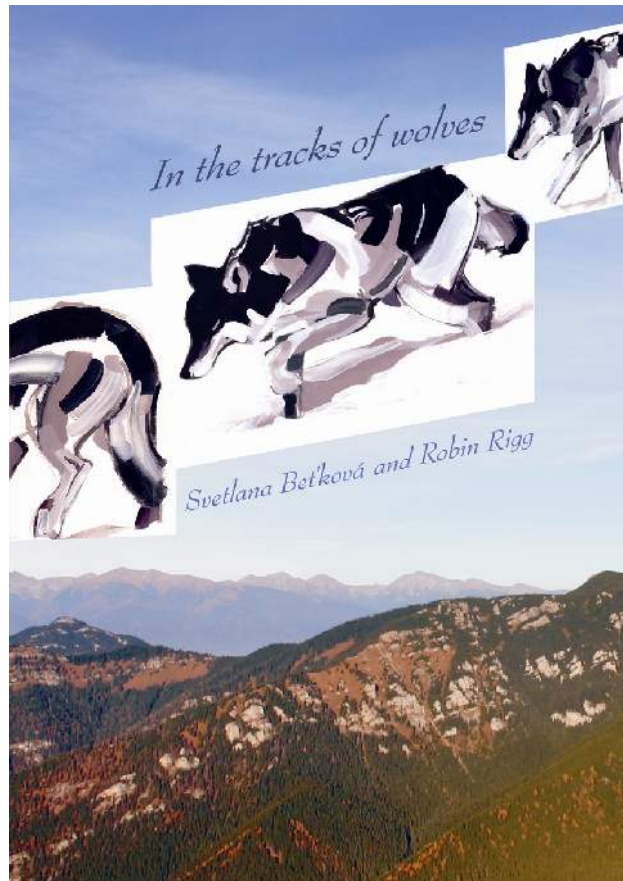
Conflicts



Perception of conflicts



Education



Exhibitions, presentations



Work with children



Website

■ www.medvede.sk

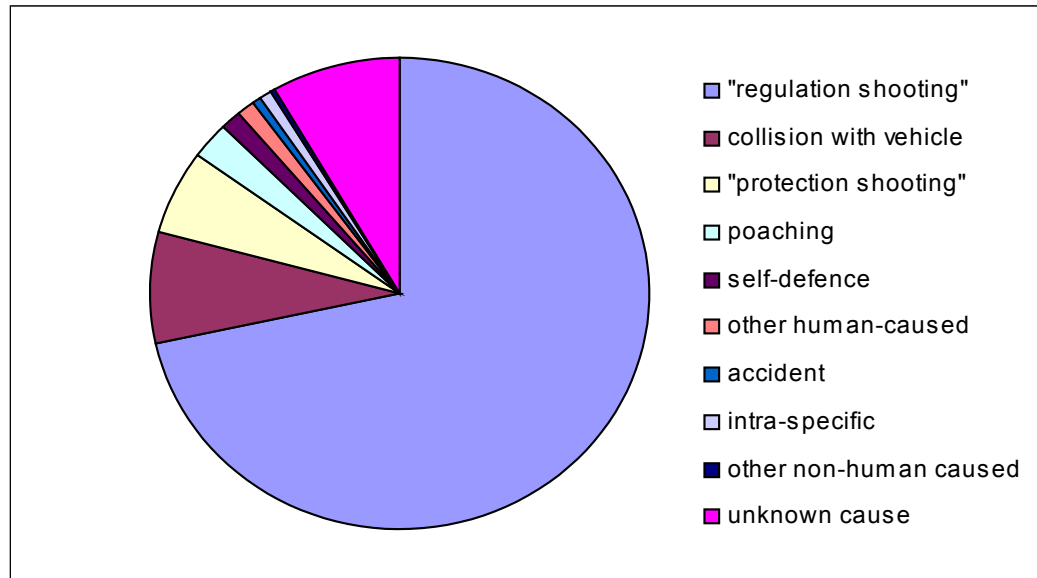


Evaluation of management



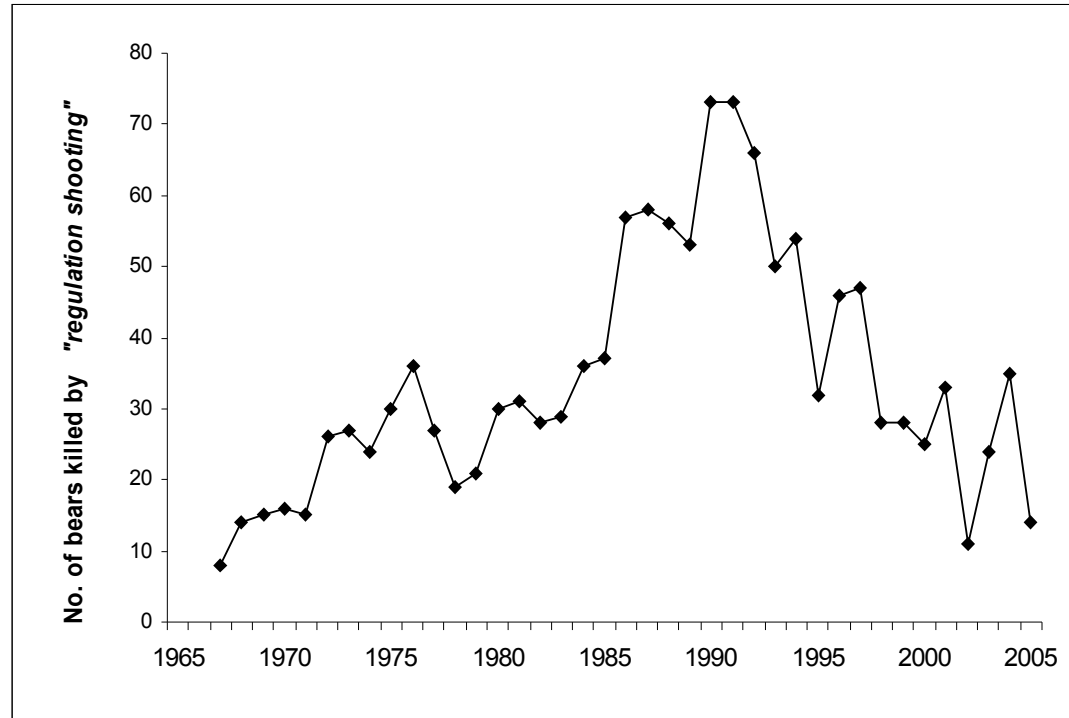
- Commissioned and funded by WWF
- Realized by Slovak Wildlife Society
- Data from State Nature Conservancy, National Forestry Centre, Agriculture Ministry, Slovak Hunting Union, etc.

Causes of bear mortality



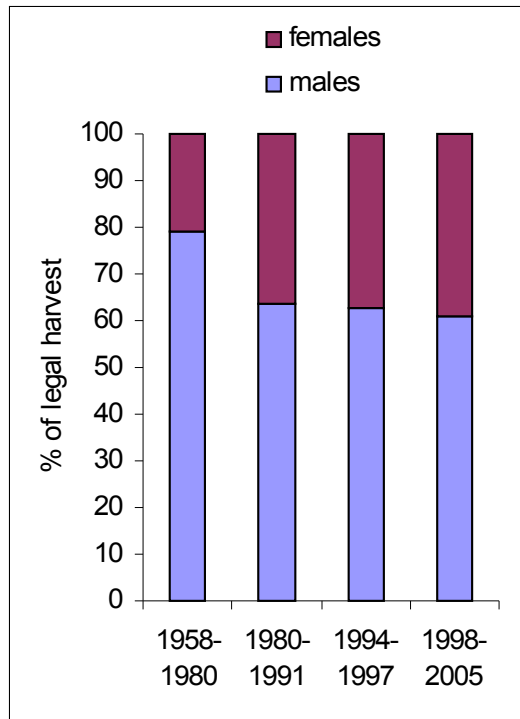
- 1994-2006: average of 45 known bear deaths per year.
- c.6% of the estimated population.
- Around 90% of known mortality is caused by humans.

Population control

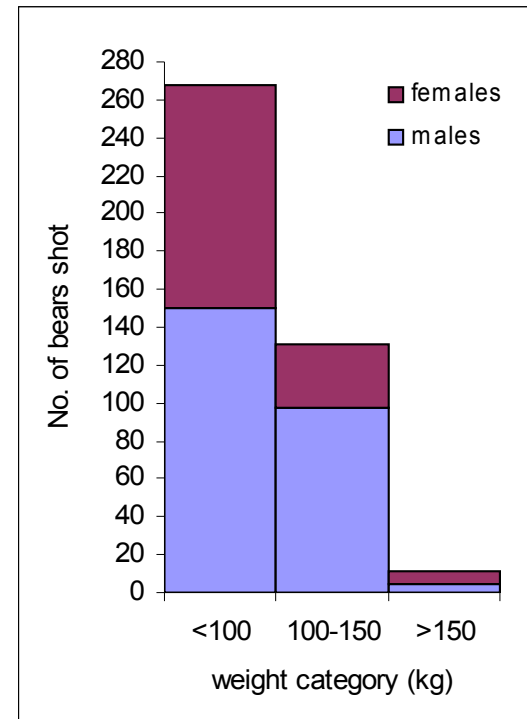


- Legal hunting accounts for 72% of known mortality
- Probably less than maximum sustainable level (8.5% of population or c.70 individuals per year).

Population control



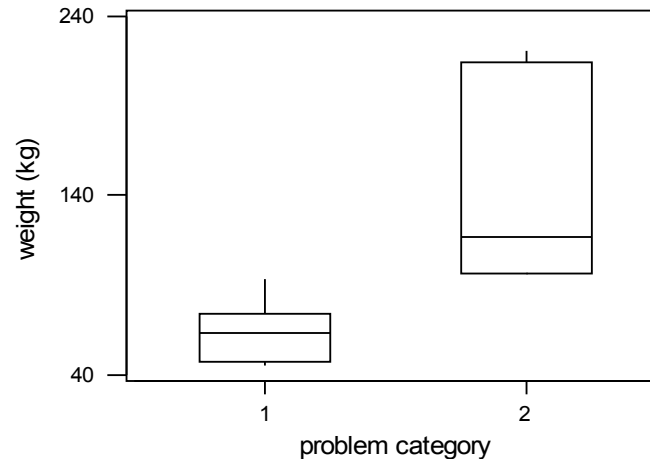
- In 1958-1980, 230 of 291 (79%) legally shot bears were male.



- Of 155 bears shot in 2000-2005 more than a third weighed > 100kg.

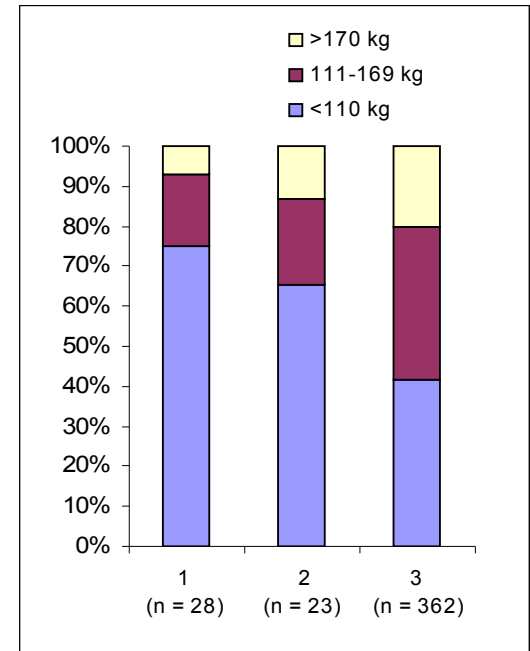
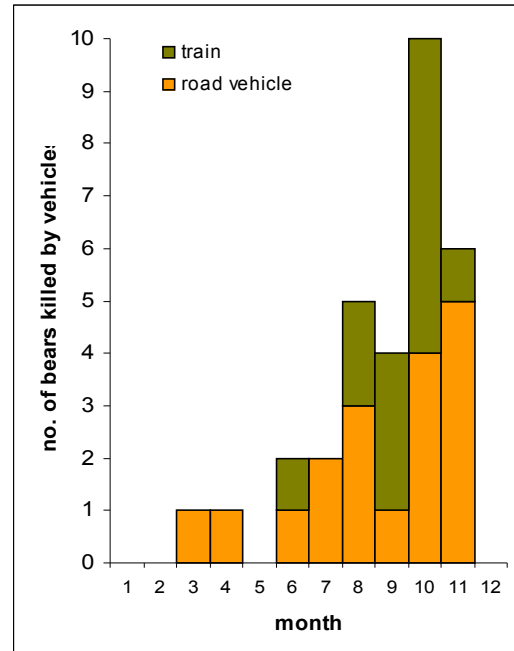
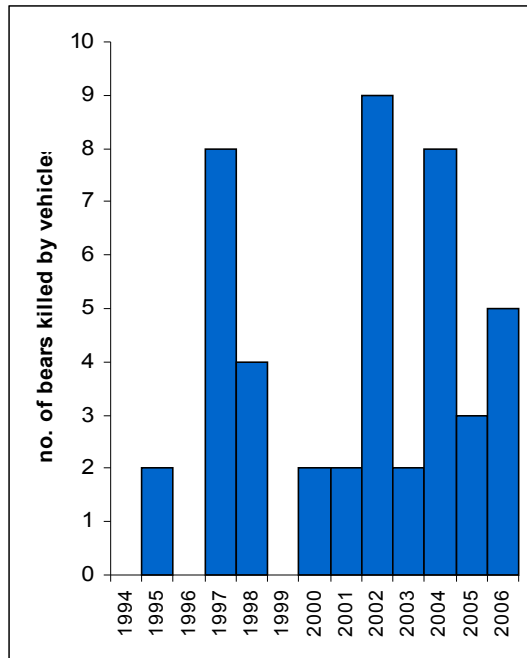
Shooting of problem bears

- Weight of “problem bears” shot in 1998-2004:
(1) fed on refuse ($n = 6$);
(2) damage to livestock/beehives ($n = 7$).



Mannov-Whitneyho U -test, $p = 0,0034$

Vehicle collisions

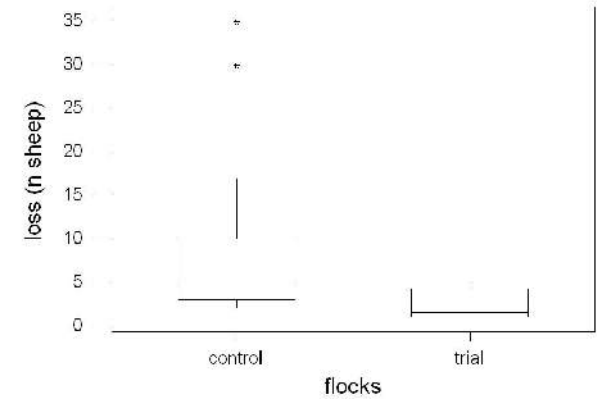


- Up to 9 bears per year (average 3.5) killed by vehicles.
- More than 75% in August-November.
- More than half bears killed in 1994-2006 were < 3 years old.

Non-lethal damage prevention



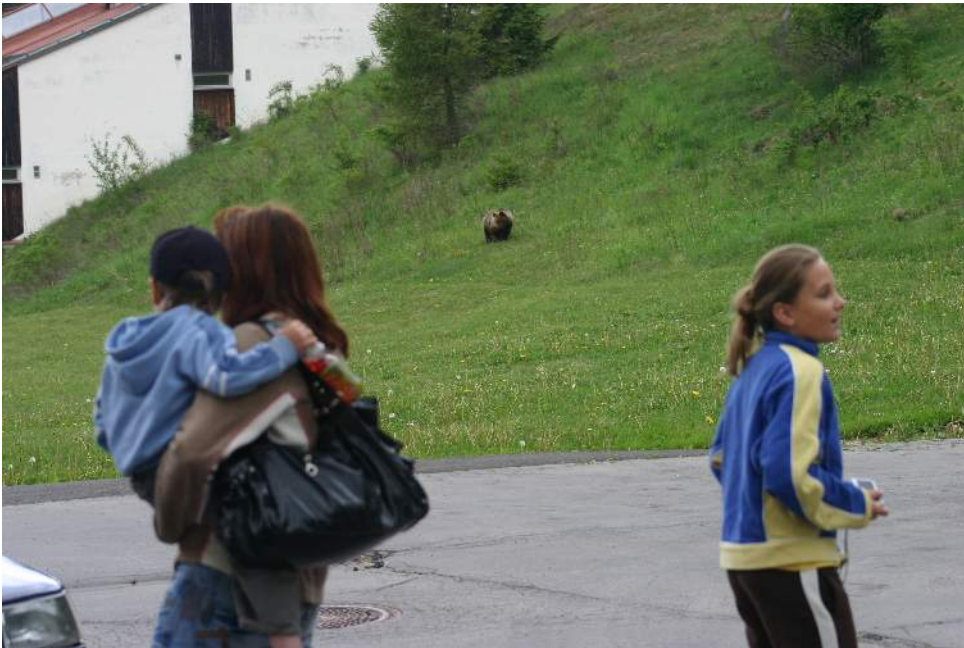
Livestock guarding dogs



Bear proof bins



Media stars



Fladry



Electric fences



Attacks: safety advice

**AKO BYŤ V BEZPEČÍ NA ÚZEMÍ
S VÝSKYTM MEDVEĐOV**



Tento program je spoločným náorom voľúcich odborníkov na správanie sa medveďov a jeho vyanam pre bezpečnosť človeka. Ako byť v bezpečí na území s výskytom medveďov poskytuje informácie, ktoré pomôžu redukovať stratenia ľudí a poškodenia majetku spôsobené medveďmi. Väčšina týchto rád sa dá uplatniť na Slovensku.



Program rozšíri vaše vedomosti o správaní sa medveďa a pomôže vám predísť stretnutiam a útokom medveďov. Umožní vám vidieť si medveďa a miesta kde žijú.

Prezentované spoločnosťou The Safety in Bear Country Society v spolupráci s The International Association for Bear Research and Management a SWS - Slovak Wildlife Society - Spoločnosť pre výskum, vzdelávanie a spoluprácu s prírodou.



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**AKO BYŤ V BEZPEČÍ NA ÚZEMÍ
S VÝSKYTM MEDVEĐOV**



**Behavioristický prístup
k redukovaniu rizika**



Stren Colour 48 Min.

VHS

Pepper spray



- *"...in front of me a 200 kg bear appeared. There were about 8 metres between us and it was obviously going to come closer. I took out the bear spray and sprayed. The bear stopped then started to run away... I was surprised how well it paralyzed the bear. I think it was more humane and also safer than shooting."*
- Ján Škoda, forester and hunter, Slovakia, 2008.

Non-lethal damage prevention?

- Obstacles:
 - scepticism
 - lack of motivation
 - traditional focus on hunting
 - low awareness
 - disinformation (the MEDIA)
 - inactivity of some authorities
 - NOT usually a financial problem

Thank you for your attention

