



migrating populations of geese. Another factor destroying MSA and disturbing geese is grassland burning, which is common in European Russia.

Widespread degradation of feeding and staging habitats of geese is a common problem in Upper Volga region. Geese have lately concentrated nearby big cities and industrial centers, where soil fertilization creates good feeding conditions in spring time. Over the last 20 years, sown areas have decreased 1.7-2.5-fold in all four regions. This fact reflects the general situation in agriculture in European Russia. Decline of agricultural production and reduction of sown areas have impaired food supply for geese in spring.

Using individual colour neck-banding we proved that the flyway of geese of the West European population runs over the Russian Plain. In 2008-2009, we captured and marked 144 Greater White-Fronted Geese in Kologriv (Unzha River floodplain, Kostroma Region). The percentage of European resights of the geese banded in Kologriv was 80% in 2008 and 66% in 2009. The geese were observed in the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Belgium and Denmark.

At present, the most topical goal is to work out and adopt an integrated master plan for migrating goose populations management. Such plan should be approved by all regional hunting departments.



## CALVING GROUNDS OF REINDEER

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It was proved that the reindeer populations have permanent calving grounds (Klein 1978; Valkenburg 2001; Russell *et al.* 2002). However,



it is unclear what features of landscape, relief, and biotope are important for reindeer. The next peculiarities of the environment are under discussion: openness of the landscape, distance from summer grounds, smoothed relief, early green vegetation, and shelters against snow-storm.

We studied localities where calving grounds of wild and tame reindeer of Russia are known. We also made review of literature on calving grounds of North America reindeer. The list of determinants of calving grounds was completed and the attempt to predict the localities suitable for reindeer calving was carried out.



## **MONITORING REFERENCE GAME SPECIES IN A PILOT AREA**

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Materials gathered during the field work carried out in a pilot area in Pryazhinsky District, Republic of Karelia (middle taiga) from 1969 to 2004 are analyzed. Winter track counts, the method of following animal tracks, summer radial transect counts of bear, aerial counts of ungulates in winter habitats were used to trace the abundance dynamics and patterns in the spatial distribution of species. Materials are provided concerning land colonization by red fox in abundance rise periods, patterns in the spatial distribution of brown bear and moose, utilization of lynx resources in the local area.

