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**Detecting patteredns of angler selective behaviour in
the Czech recreational fishery statistics**

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Ph.D. Thesis

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I declare that this thesis has been fully worked out by me using the cited literature only and that neither this thesis, nor any of the publications attached within, have been submitted for the purpose of obtaining the title of Ph.D., or any other title, at another institution.

RNDr. Martin Jankovský,

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ABSTRACT

Methods for detecting patterns of angler selective fishing behaviour in the long term recreational fishery statistics are presented in this Ph.D. Thesis. The motivating idea is that mainly different anglers' fishing preferences or attitudes towards particular fish species obstruct applying anglers' catches data for ongoing use in ichthyology research. Better recognising angler selectivity is therefore judged to be the key point from the viewpoint of fish and fishery sciences. Methods affecting angler behaviour can be directly applied by other specialists, e.g. social scientists. The thesis consists of five papers two of which are published (paper 1, 2), other two of which are accepted for publishing (paper 3, 4) and the last of which (paper 5) is in the status of manuscript before submitting.

In the first two papers the role of common carp catches is focused. By using multivariate techniques it is studied if the increased exploitation of carp increases also the exploitation of other fish species. Time series of carp catches serve as an explanatory variable, other species catches through the same time are processed as independent variables. According to expectations the positive effect of carp catches on those of the other species was approved at the river section with the highest expected density of stocked carps (paper 1) or at a reservoir with best conditions for several days fishing trips (paper 2).

In paper 3, not only common carp, but all frequently caught species are focused. Twenty year time series of such species were processed to find either positive or negative correlations, which were hypothesised to be the signals of angler selective behaviour. Datasets from four very different reservoirs were analysed and most likely explanations of the observed correlations were found in various management restrictions, shoreline accessibility or stocking activities. Several of these potential explanations were further tested in the logbook analyses in papers 4 and 5.

In these two papers, individual angler (paper 4) or even individual catches (paper 5) data were analysed to approve, if the positive correlations have at least a theoretical background in angler selective fishing. This was confirmed in paper 4 where a good-sized group of anglers focusing during a year at each other fluctuating species was identified. Nevertheless, the hypothesis that this angler group consists of holiday takers being not so selective and specialized was disproved in paper 5.

ABSTRAKT

V disertační práci jsou prezentovány metody detekce selektivního chování rybářů v dlouhodobých statistikách českého rekreačního rybářství. Práce je motivována myšlenkou, že především různé rybářské preference nebo postoje vůči lovu konkrétních druhů ryb brání širší aplikaci rybářských dat. Poznání selektivity rybářů je proto především z pohledu ichtyologického výzkumu chápáno jako klíčové. Metody postihující chování rybářů mají navíc potenciál sloužit i v dalších, např. sociálně vědních oborech. Práce sestává z pěti článků z nichž dva jsou publikované (paper 1, 2), další dva přijaté k publikování (paper 3, 4) a poslední (paper 5) je ve stadiu rukopisu před postoupením recenznímu řízení.

První dva články jsou věnované roli masivního lovu kapra. Za použití mnohorozměrných metod je studováno, zda zvýšený výlov tohoto druhu zvyšuje výlov dalších rybích druhů. Časové řady výlovu kapra jsou tak analyzovány jako vysvětlující proměnná, výlov ostatních druhů za stejné období jako závislé proměnné. Dle očekávání, pozitivní vliv úlovků kapra na úlovky ostatních druhů byl prokázán v říčním úseku s nejvyšší očekávanou hustotou kapří násady (paper 1) nebo v údolní nádrži vyznačující se nejlepší dostupností a podmínkami pro vícedenní rybářské výlety (paper 2).

V dalším příspěvku (paper 3) je věnována pozornost rybářským preferencím vůči všem častěji loveným druhům. Mezi dvacetiletými časovými řadami úlovků přibližně sedmi druhů byly hledány signifikantně pozitivní i negativní korelace a tyto byly následně analyzované jako možný signál selektivního rybolovu. Takto byla zpracována data ze čtyř velmi odlišných nádrží a přijatelná vysvětlení všech pozorovaných mezidruhových korelací byla v souladu s hypotézou nalezena v různých rybolovných opatřeních, přístupnosti břehové linie nebo násadovém hospodářství. Vybrané konkrétní závěry byly kvantitativně dokládány v navazující analýze individuálních dat v článcích 4 a 5 (paper 4, 5).

V těchto článcích byly analyzovány sumární roční úlovky jednotlivých rybářů (paper 4) či dokonce jednotlivé úlovky z odevzdaných lístků (paper 5) s cílem prokázat, zda pozitivní korelace mají alespoň teoretický základ v selektivním chování rybářů. Toto bylo skutečně v jednom z obou článků (paper 4) prokázáno, neboť se podařilo identifikovat dostatečně početnou skupinu rybářů, kteří se během roku zaměřují na lov právě vzájemně korelujících různých druhů. Nicméně, hypotéza, že tato skupina rybářů sestává z prázdninových návštěvníků s nízkou specializací a selektivitou byla v zamítnuta (paper 5).

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Attached papers

Introduction

Recreational fishing is defined as an activity of individuals, which is conducted for sport and leisure and has a possible secondary objective of catching fish for personal consumption - (FAO 1997; Pitcher & Hollingworth 2002; Rangel & Erzini 2007). It more and more gets to the focus of scientific discussions as it turns out to be an important agent, besides the commercial fisheries (Smith 2002; Hilborn *et al.* 2003; Pauly *et al.*, 2003), of general fish stock declines (Cooke and Cowx 2004, 2006; Lewin *et al.* 2006). The higher socio-economic benefit of the recreational concept is sometimes moreover suggested against the commercial one (Kearney 2002; Cooke & Cowx 2006; Arlinghaus *et al.* 2010).

Overfishing is not only a problem of marine fisheries but becomes an important issue in the case of inland stocks as well. Here, the stocking enhancements are usually applied and a variety of semi natural to cultural based fisheries practises comes up worldwide (Lorenz *et al.* 1998; Petr 2004; Jayasinghe *et al.* 2006). In developed countries the artificial stocking is mainly focused on enriching the fishing wards to anglers' use (Pánek 1987; Vácha 1998; Spurný 2001; Wedekind *et al.* 2001; Phelps *et al.* 2008). How do these artificial activities involve the remaining fish stock, the overall anglers' catchments or the anglers' attitudes towards particular fish species seem to be the crucial questions everywhere.

Another issue that can be studied only with using long term data is year class strength variation or the recruitment dynamics. Although the YCS variation research received the biggest attention in commercial fisheries (Eckmann 1987; Cyterski & Spangler 1996; Auvinen *et al.* 2004; Lahnsteiner & Wanzenböck 2004; Salonen 2004; Sutela *et al.* 2004; Valkeajärvi *et al.* 2004; Viljanen *et al.* 2004; Straile *et al.* 2007; Lappalainen *et al.* 2008; Thomas 2008), there is a considerable tradition of such research also in cyprinides (Cragg-Hine & Jones 1969; Hellowell 1972; Mann 1973; Cowx 1988; Nunn *et al.* 2003) and other among anglers popular species: white and black crappie (Maceina 2003), black and striped basses (Bonvechio & Allen 2007; Secor 2000), glass eel (Sullivan *et al.* 2006), yellow perch (Williamson *et al.* 1997) and murray cod (Humphries 2005).

The usual methods for evaluating recreational fisheries are creel surveys (Vostradovský *et al.* 1978; Malvetusto 1983; Cowx 1991; Pollock *et al.* 1994), routine monitoring surveys (Pivnička & Čihař 1986; Cowx 1995, 1996; Wiśniewolski *et al.* 2007) or various on- and off-sight questioner methodologies (Green *et al.* 1982; Malvetusto 1983, Hudgins 1984, Kershner & Van Kirk 1984; Cowx 1991; Pollock *et al.* 1994; Weithman 1991; Wilde & Ditton 1994).

Even if they have been massively innovated (Cowx 1996; Toivonen *et al.* 1998; Wild *et al.* 1998) and also combining different approaches has been welcome to enhance standard procedures (Ditton & Hunt 2001; Lockwood & Rakoczy 2005; Soupir *et al.* 2006), short time periods to which the resulted data usually refer discourage the desired research of any historical trends.

Fishing clubs records and angler association statistics have the potential to overcome this problem (North 1983; Harris & Bergensen 1985; Gartside *et al.* 1999; Cowx & Frear 2004; Draštík *et al.* 2004). Numerous researches have moreover approved their reliability for indexing long-term trends (Carlander *et al.* 1958; Green 1985; Ebbers 1987; Stanley 1989; Sztramko *et al.* 1991; Kerr 1996; MacLennan 1996; Pivnička *et al.* 2005; Mosidy & Duffy 2007; VanDeValk *et al.* 2007; Younk & Pereira 2007). Unfortunately these anglers statistics are not so common (Essig & Holliday 1991; Pollock *et al.* 1994; Gartside *et al.* 1999) as it is in the case of commercial fisheries (Smith 2002; Hilborn *et al.* 2003; Pauly *et al.* 2003; Auvinen *et al.* 2004; Salonen 2004; Sutela *et al.* 2004; Valkeajärvi & Marjomäki 2004; Viljanen *et al.* 2004; Zeeberg *et al.* 2008).

This is a big opportunity for making most of Czech anglers' statistics. An organized recreational fishery has got a long tradition in The Czech Republic and the fishery statistics refer up to more than fifty years backwards. Their quality has resulted in a lot of interesting even if mostly descriptive studies: Lusk & Gajduček 1977; Lusk 1978; Lusk & Krčál 1983; Lusk 1984 a, b; Pivnička 1985; Pivnička & Ježek 1989; Lusk & Halačka 1995; Baruš *et al.* 2000; Habán 1999; Spurný & Chára 1999; Baruš *et al.* 2000; Pivnička & Rybář 2001; Smutný & Pivnička 2001; Spurný 2001; Baruš *et al.* 2002; Lusk *et al.* 2003; Draštík *et al.* 2004; Spurný 2004, Jankovský 2007a,b; Jankovský & Pivnička 2008.

To make the first step (Jankovský 2010d, Jankovský *et al.* in press b) over the speculative character of any potentially important results and uncertainty what is the real population status and what is the consequence of a selective fishing, detecting patterns of angler behaviour was focused in this Ph.D. Thesis. The thesis consists of five articles and other hypotheses and papers in draw are introduced in "Perspectives". Two of the papers have been already published (paper 1 and 2), two are accepted for publishing (paper 3 and 4) and one is in the status of manuscript. Within the Perspectives, issues are revealed whose research has already started with this thesis or is ready to start as a consequence of the results presented in the papers submitted here.

List of attached papers

- Paper 1 Humpl M., Pivnička K. & Jankovský M. (2009): Sport fishery statistics, water quality and fish assemblages in the Berounka River in 1975 - 2005. *Folia Zoologica*, 58(4):457-465.
- Paper 2 Jankovský M. (2009): The role of the common carp catches in the overall angling exploitation on two different reservoirs in the Czech Republic. *Acta Universitatis Carolinae Enviromentalica*, 1-2, 79-90
- Paper 3 Jankovský M. & Pivnička K. (in press): Angler fishing strategies in different reservoirs as assessed from fisheries statistics (1988 - 2007). *Acta Universitatis Carolinae Environmentalica* 24 (1-2)
- Paper 4 Jankovský M., Boukal D., Pivnička K. & Kubečka J. (in press): Tracing possible drivers of synchronously fluctuating species catches in individual logbook data. *Fisheries Management and Ecology*
- Paper 5 Jankovský M., Boukal D., Pivnička K. & Kubečka J. (in prep): Seasonality in anglers' fishing preference: Are holiday anglers agents of synchronously fluctuating species catches in the fisheries statistics?

Thesis Summary

Patterns of angler selective fishing behaviour were suggested (**paper 3**) or quantitatively identified (**paper 1, 2, 4, 5**) in the Czech recreational fishery statistics throughout this thesis. Use of the Czech catch statistics for studying trends in fish populations is thus recommended only after a thorough analyses introduced in the separate papers: a multivariate analyses (**paper 1, 2**), correlation analyses (**paper 3**) or even individual logbook data analyses: either better reachable individual angler data analysis (**paper 4**) or an advanced analysis of individual catches (**paper 5**).

Multivariate ordination techniques were successfully applied for evaluating the relationship between the catches of common carp on one side and the catches of all other species on the other side (**paper 1, paper 2**). Carp catches were handled as one of the explanatory (environmental) variables and other species catches represented independent variables. In **paper 1**, the effect of increased carp catches and other environmental factors on the spectrum of other species catches was evaluated over long time series and was studied at different stretches of a long river. At some cases, the effect of separate environmental factors was significant, even if it was only at those river stretches where the variability of these factors in time was higher. Time series of non-carp species catches are concluded to be a useful instrument for description long-term changes in selected stream environments. Catches of common carp processed as an environmental factor were significant at places with exceptionally high concentration of stocked carps. The other fish species can therefore be roughly called “by-catches” of common carp at such places.

The role of common carp as a preferred species was specially focused in **paper 2**. Unlike in the **paper 1**, environment of reservoirs was adopted instead of rivers to prevent from speculations about fish migrations. The multivariate ordinations were applied as in **paper 1**, plus catch-stock correlations of carp were tested. Study period was considerably shortened against **paper 1** and the “past” and “recent” periods were evaluated separately. In the “past”, when the stocking with common carp was generally low, the above mentioned significant relationship between carp and all non-carp catches was always missing. At “present”, nevertheless, the significant results were observed in the case of a reservoir with higher anglers’ pressure, while the negative ones occurred at a reservoir with low expected anglers’ attendance. The positive linear dependence of carp catches on carp stocking was also significant only at the reservoir with higher anglers’ attendance and in the “present” period.

The analysis applied is recommended for rough assessing angler fishing preferences toward selected species.

Results concerning common carp in the previous two papers provoked an overall correlation analysis comprising all frequently caught species (**paper 3**). It was widely hypothesised, that not only common carp is preferably caught and that significant correlations between long-term catches of any different species can indicate anglers' strategies or techniques. A number of positive and negative correlations were really discovered in the datasets from four very different reservoirs. These data structures were attempted to be handled as pointing only at angler behaviour even if an alternative explanation in fish population dynamics is theoretically same well likely. Potential explanations for particular cases of significant correlations were found in various management restrictions, shoreline accessibility or stocking activities. The speculative character of these explanations became a motivation for logbook analyses in the following two papers. **Paper 4** and **paper 5** thus use individual anglers' logbooks to test a probability that angler selective fishing causes the observed positive correlations identified in **paper 3**.

In **paper 4**, a method is suggested and demonstrated how to approve the possibility that the positive correlations observed between long term catches of different species become as a consequence of the same anglers' catches. The necessary prerequisite is worked out that such group of anglers must be good-sized and that the total catches of both taken species reached by these anglers must be significantly higher than those of the remaining angling visitors. The synchronous fluctuations identified in the dataset from a valley reservoir thus showed up to be explainable by the defined group of same anglers, called here the "generalists" as they do not specialize on catching just one of the focal species. Their number was higher than expected by chance and their catches were also significantly higher than those of the "specialists" the category defined for anglers that caught only one of the "each-other-correlating" species in the whole year. The great advantage of the method is its dependence on only summarized annual catches information about individual anglers which is easily available in the databases of both angler unions in the Czech Republic.

Contrary, a manual rewriting the daily catches from the logbooks was necessary for analyses suggested and applied in **paper 5**. Here, the conclusions about the same anglers made in the **paper 4** and speculations about holiday anglers from the **paper 3** are further evolved. It is hypothesised that anglers being at the background of the observed positive inter-species correlations are holiday takers, as these are expected to be not so specialized. The fact that a number of the synchronous inter-species fluctuations were observed at a reservoir with high

peaks of anglers' attendance in the summer, while no such synchronicities appeared in the case of a small urban reservoir where the angler attendance is spread into the whole year, was the reason of demonstrating the method on both these reservoirs. The proposed analyses revealed that time intervals between catches of selected species were usually significantly longer than expected by chance, suggesting that anglers at both studied reservoirs shift their focus from species to species during the season. The hypothesis about unselective holiday fishermen being agents of the observed synchronous fluctuations was thus disproved and the group of "same anglers" as defined in **paper 4** therefore must be more heterogeneous than judged in **paper 3**.

Perspectives

However well angler behaviour towards the positively correlated long term catches was evaluated (papers 4 and 5), the same should be done in the case of the **negatively correlating long term catches** as they were identified in paper 3. The aim is to find if it is anglers' switch in the interest or anyhow else motivated alternation of the fishing focus on one or the other species what causes the negative correlations of catches in time. If this is not approved, there is an alternative explanation in population dynamics, particularly in competition or predation. These density dependent mechanisms have received a considerable attention recently (Auvinen et al. 2004; Salonen 2004; Valkeajärvi & Marjomäki 2004; Humphries 2005; Boukal 2010). Unfortunately, lack of any longer term scientific fish sampling is the problem for direct testing the influence of these density dependent factors in case of the Czech reservoirs.

Much better position exists for also not yet realized research of the **alternative explanation** (= not connected with angler behaviour) **of the positive long term correlations** that were indentified both within one reservoir (paper 3) and among different waters (Pivnička et Rybář 2001; Jankovský 2007b), as long term data on possible density independent factors are archived in the Czech Hydrometeorology Institute. The generally well known factors influence of which is most likely is the water temperature (e.g. Mann et al. 1984, Mills & Mann 1985, Copp 1990; Wootton 1990; Mann 1995; Cowx 2000; Grenouillet et al. 2001) and the discharge rate together with the water level fluctuations (Lucas et al. 1998, Cowx 2001; Nunn et al. 2003; Bonvechio & Allen 2007).

A special case was observed in the dataset of the Slapy reservoir, where the positive long term correlation occurred between catches of a fully (common carp) and strongly (pike) stocking dependent species. Both species are artificially recruited because they are stocked in a harvestable size and stocking management data thus can provide the desired evidence of the recruitment fluctuation in time. Even if a preliminary analyses using linear regressions shows some theoretical possibility of the coincidence between regular stocking events of both species (Jankovský *et al.* 2010 a), an advanced “generalized least squares regressions” should be used here (Jankovský *et al.* 2010 c).

Generalized least square models seem to be especially advantageous for better recognising **common carp catch-stock correlations** in the conditions of the Czech recreational fishery. A strong positive dependence of caught carps total weight on the stocked carps total weight has been already noticed (Pivnička & Rybář 2001; Draštík *et al.* 2004) and in a number of studies, carp catch-stock dependences within different water bodies were evaluated using linear regressions (Jankovský 2007a; Jankovský 2007b; Jankovský & Pivnička 2008; Jankovský M. & Pivnička in press.) Nevertheless, the advanced method has the potential to determine the precise residence time of stocked fish and to assess also the mean growth rate (Jankovský *et al.* 2010 c). There is a unique opportunity to compare such results on the growth with the growth data obtained in the traditional research currently performed at some Moravian reservoirs (Habán *et al.* 2006, 2007; Prokeš *et al.* 2008, 2009, 2010).

Even if the pilot studies in paper 4 and 5 open the great potential of individual logbook data for future investigations, direct **interviewing and creel surveys** will be necessary as well. For example, whether anglers purposely switch their attention toward another species or if the decreasing catches really reflect decreasing population status of one species can be found out only through interviews. More difficult task that should be solved in the field is evaluating issues like misidentifying species, misreporting catches or even some serious cases of pouching, things that were questioned many times and never sufficiently answered (Essig and Holliday 1991, Pollock *et al.* 1994; Bray & Schramm 2001; Sullivan 2003; Page *et al.* 2004). Exceptionally good cooperation was already experienced by the author of this Thesis during both performing structured interviews on large Lipno reservoirs (Boukal *et al.* 2010) and designing and leading the questioner research on a small urban Hostivař reservoir (Winterová 2010).

The last issue that has been started (Jankovský *et al.* 2010b) and deserves to be mentioned here comes from a comparison between the relative species structure of anglers' catches on

one hand and scientific **benthic gillnets estimates** (Appelberg *et al.* 1995; European Standard 14 757, 2005; Prchalová *et al.* 2008) on the other. The idea that both datasets can be compared is based on the considerably overlapping peaks of fish feeding activity (Prchalová *et al.* 2010) and anglers attendance (Winterová 2010). Three naturally recruited, frequently (minimal „eatable“ size judged after consultation with bailiff) and hopefully randomly (Pivnička & Rybář 2001; Jankovský & Pivnička in press) caught species were only focused on: bream (over 23 cm), roach (over 23 cm) and perch (over 15 cm). The one-time gillnet sampling of nine Czech reservoirs was realized during August and September (in 2008) when fishes are expected to utilize whole productive potential of a water body (Hladík & Kubečka, 2003; Vašek *et al.* 2004).

Even if the lack of anglers' effort data allowed only qualitative comparison of the relative abundances (percentage of all three species consisted 100 %) and it is thus impossible to be sure if a certain species is really over/underestimating by anglers or if its percentage is just a passive reaction on the percentages of the remaining species, one remarkable pattern occurred. Although roach seems to be generally (similarly like perch and unlike bream) underestimated by anglers (from the viewpoint of gillnets) it is surprisingly overestimated at two middle-sized reservoirs laying only a few kilometres away from each other in the region with the highest unemployment in the Czech Republic. It can thus be speculated whether the residents after the recent collapse of local mining and heavy industries are trying to maximize their exploitation of available fish stock resources by not releasing even the low favoured fish species here which roach definitely is. The real approval of this speculation can be only revealed by interviewing anglers or at least a logbook data analysis.

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