

**COMMISSION**

**on Rare, Endangered Species of**

**Animals and Plants in Moscow**

**(Commission on the Red Book of the City of Moscow)**

**UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF  
MOSCOW**

To the Director of the ANO "Charitable Society for the Care of Homeless Animals"

E.A. Ilyinsky

The Commission on the Red Book of the city of Moscow has considered your appeal and reports the following.

The Moscow City Duma is preparing for approval a draft law of the city of Moscow on animals in the city, which provides for the sterilization of stray dogs with their subsequent return to the places of capture. At the same time, their number in Moscow is not taken into account - several tens of thousands, which is a disgrace to our city and the whole country. The adoption of such a law not only discredits the capital of the Russian Federation as a civilized city and puts the interests of a small group of citizens, financially or because of scientific ambitions interested in the sterilization of stray dogs, above the life and health of ordinary Muscovites who are not protected from attacks and bites of wild dogs, but also cause great harm to wild animals living in Moscow.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, numerous facts of persecution and attacks by packs of stray dogs on such wild animals as elk, spotted deer, roe deer have been established in Moscow. It was they who destroyed spotted deer and roe deer in the urban forests of Moscow in those years, and the elk was preserved only in Losiny Ostrov. And the occasional visits of the same roe deer to the urban forests of Moscow are always caused by their death due to the fault of stray dogs.

A particularly alarming situation in connection with the problem of stray dogs has developed with the species of animals listed in the Red Book of the city of Moscow.

In 2000, stray dogs dug a residential burrow and destroyed the last family of badgers in Moscow. In 2003, dogs crushed two individuals of exceptionally rare animals in Moscow - forest mice. It was stray dogs that became the main reason for the sharp decline in the number of hedgehogs in the urban forests of Moscow. Hares are constantly persecuted by stray dogs. In the autumn of 2004, when the snow fell only at the beginning of December, it turned out to be very difficult for white hares to find shelter in October, as a result of persecution by packs of dogs, this species disappeared in several forests of the city. For example, in Serebryany Bor, where 4-6 white hares lived permanently, they were destroyed by stray dogs, of which there are more than 30 individuals here on an area of less than 2 sq. km. In the spring, when stray dogs, as all experts in this field know, especially activate the hunting instinct, they literally comb through the meadows and forests preserved in the city, destroying newborn hares, small mammals and other animals, ruining birds' nests located on the ground. And the sterilization of bitches will never eliminate the episodic awakening of the hunting instinct in stray dogs that keep in packs.

There are known facts of the penetration of stray dogs into aviaries and the destruction of animals contained there. In Losiny Ostrov in the 1970s, 4 fallow deer were crushed by dogs, after which the maintenance of these attractive animals for visitors had to be abandoned. Even the animals of the Moscow Zoo, where several kangaroos were literally torn apart by them, did not escape the attack of dogs. In city parks, stray dogs ruin the nests of ducks, which they arrange on reservoirs in houses specially installed

for them. A program adopted by the Moscow Government to restore biological diversity in specially protected natural areas has been threatened with disruption, since even rare animals kept in aviaries are attacked by stray dogs.

Statements by active supporters of the sterilization of stray dogs who speak under the slogans of animal protection that some evidence of harm caused by stray dogs to wild animals is required cannot be taken seriously (as a rule, such defenders are scientists whose subject of scientific interest and study are various aspects of the life of stray dogs in a large city). It is no coincidence that in hunting farms, nature reserves and other protected areas, the fight against stray dogs is a mandatory environmental event. As for Moscow, of the 18 species of mammals listed in the Red Book of the city of Moscow, persecution by stray dogs is indicated for 5 as one of the limiting factors of habitat on the territory of our city. And the Red Book of the City of Moscow is an official document of the Moscow Government.

It should also be noted that the draft law of the city of Moscow on animals in the city, the introduction of which may entail damage to the nature of Moscow, does not have a positive conclusion of the state environmental expertise. If this law in the submitted version is adopted, the commission reserves the right to take measures provided for by law to invalidate it.

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