

## **Evolution in the distribution and trend of Alpine ibex in the province of Sondrio (Italy) since the first reintroduction.**

*Ferloni M., Vanotti A. & Corpo di Polizia Provinciale*

In the province of Sondrio Alpine ibex was extinct in the XVII century because of excessive culling. From the half of XIX century, the species became present again because of animals migrating from Switzerland, where the first reintroductions started in 1920. In 1967-68, Stelvio National Park started the reintroduction of Alpine ibex in three areas of its Lombard part, going on until 1990-1994. From 1984 to 1990 other reintroductions were carried out in the province, both in the Rhaetic Alps, (Val Masino) and in the Orobic Alps, in two areas including also the neighbouring provinces of Lecco, Bergamo and Brescia. Nowadays 11 colonies are counted in the province, for a total estimated number of 1300-1400 animals. Four of these colonies are partly or totally in the area of Stelvio Park, two in the Orobic Alps, one in the Lepontine Alps, formed by animals coming from Como province, and the remaining four in the Rhaetic Alps. In this work the distribution of the colonies and the consistency reached by ibex populations are illustrated. The composition of the population every year is also shown for the colonies that have been surveyed since the foundation. From the collected data, ibex populations in Sondrio province demonstrated a marked increase in the first years, but in recent years appear to be reduced or have come to a balance, probably due to a combination of factors (reached carrying capacity and/or illegal culling). Moreover, there seems to be a reduction of the natural expansion of the population towards surrounding areas with lower densities.