

## **Project Update: August 2010**

The project is growing; we are collecting a large amount of information that will serve as a baseline for managing the European wild boar in the El Palmar National Park. Also, through coordination with researchers associated with the management of alien species are being generated other research projects related to the topic.

### **Data collection**

We registered a significant presence of traces of rhea, emblematic species of the park and that is decreasing nowadays. The tracks were recorded in open grassland environments, sites preferred by rheas. In some grassland, we also recorded the presence of wild boar. This is important information because it indicates that these species use common environments. On two occasions, there was evidence of predation of young rhea. However, we cannot say that the boar is the cause of the deaths, since there are other potential offspring predators like foxes. It highlights the low activity of rooting, suggesting that this species is looking for other food sources to supplement their diet at this time of year. The wild boar is omnivorous and has a variable diet over the years where it selects foods according to their availability and biological requirements.

### **Stomach Content Analysis**

We continue with the analysis of stomach contents of culled wild boar specimens since 2009. On the premises of the Centro de Zoología Aplicada on Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, we analysed samples for dietary composition of the European wild boar. The analysis was able to register a strong presence of birds. It was determined the presence of a torcaza pigeon (*Zenaida auriculata*), very abundant in recent years by the advance of agriculture. Stomachs have been recorded where 100% of content was birds. We believe that sometimes the boar can take advantage of the chicks that fall from the nest but in the stomachs have been found several adults. No one knows how the boar captures adult birds.

### **Publications in process**

We are currently in the process of drafting two scientific papers related to the situation of wild boar in Argentina and the world. We are analysing the presence of this species in protected areas of Argentina. In this way we are trying to analyse the current situation of wild boar in our country, focusing on years of occupation of the species, densities, damage, and control techniques. Moreover, work being done in conjunction with Argentinean researchers at the University of Tennessee intends to review the management of wild boar in different regions of the world where this species is exotic.