

The Golden Jackal (*Canis aureus*) – a new mammal species in the Czech Republic

Šakal obecný (*Canis aureus*) – nový druh savce v České republice

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Abstract. An adult male of the golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) was found dead close to the road near Podolí (Uherské Hradiště District, southern Moravia) on 19 March 2006. The species determination was confirmed by the presence of characteristic morphological and craniological traits (length of tail, connate balls of medial fingers on forelimbs, the shape of orbital protuberances, etc.). Detailed photographs of the finding are available. This has been the first documented record of the golden jackal in the Czech Republic.

Over the first half of the 20th century, the European population of the golden jackal (*Canis aureus* Linnaeus, 1758) declined dramatically due to habitat fragmentation and intensive hunting pressure. Population density decreased in core areas (Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece) as well as at the edges of its distribution range, from where the golden jackal disappeared completely for the next 50 years (FERIANCOVÁ-MASÁROVÁ & HANÁK 1965, KRYŠTUFEK et al. 1997). Thanks to intensive conservation, the density of the Balkan population increased at the end of the last century, especially in Bulgaria (10 000 inds.) and Greece (1000 inds.) (GIANNATOS 2004, HUMER et al. 2007). During this period, stable populations were established in Romania (200 inds.) and in Hungary (1000 inds.) (DEMETER 1984, HUMER et al. 2007). The stabilisation and growth of the Balkan population resulted in expansion of the species to central and western Europe. The presence of the golden jackal was first recorded in Italy in 1984 (LAPINI & PERCO 1988), in Slovenia in 1985 (KRYŠTUFEK & TVRTKOVIČ 1990), in Austria in 1987 (BAUER & SUCHENTRUNK 1995, SPITZENBERGER 2001), in Slovakia in 1989 (HELL & BLEHO 1995, HELL & RAJSKÝ 2000, RAJSKÝ et al. 2005) and in Germany in 1996 (MÖCKEL 2000).

Based on the location of records of the golden jackal in Austria and Slovakia (near the border with the Czech Republic), occurrence of this species in the Czech Republic has been considered very likely and it was only a matter of time before it would be confirmed (ČERVENÝ et al. 2006). Till now only personal observations of the species; e.g. locality Kropáčova Vrutice in Central Bohemia (SUHOMELOVÁ 1999), or most recently Unterurasch (Dolní Ureš) near the Lipno dam on the border with Austria (ENGLER 2007 pers. comm.), indicated its possible presence in the Czech Republic.

Finally, an adult male of the golden jackal, 11.5 kg in weight, was found dead near the village of Podolí (Uherské Hradiště District, southern Moravia; 194 m a. s. l., 49° 02' N, 17° 31' E; mapping square no. 6971) on 19 March 2006. The determination was made using extensive photodocumentation of the finding (Figs. 1, 3) and by comparison of species-specific morphological and craniological signs (Figs. 2, 3).

Cranial dimensions of the adult male of golden jackal from southern Moravia (in mm): total length of skull 162.7; condylobasal length of skull 156.5; basal length 148.2; length of upper tooth row 79.0; length



Fig. 1. A dead adult male of golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) from Podolí, southern Moravia; photo by J. NOVOTNÝ.

Obr. 1. Uhyнутý adultní samec šakala obecného (*Canis aureus*) z Podolí. Foto J. NOVOTNÝ.



Fig 2. Skull of golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) from Podolí, southern Moravia; photo by J. ČERVENÝ.

Obr. 2. Lebka šakala obecného (*Canis aureus*) z Podolí. Foto J. ČERVENÝ



Fig. 3. The connate balls of the medial fingers on forelimbs of golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) from Podolí, southern Moravia; photo by J. NOVOTNÝ.

Obr. 3. Sroslá bříška prostředních prstů na předních končetinách šakala obecného (*Canis aureus*) z Podolí. Foto J. NOVOTNÝ.

of palate 76.6; length of nasalia 67.9; zygomatic width 89.7; width of neurocranium 50.0; interorbital width 27.2; width of processus supraorbitalis 43.3; mandible length 125.0; mandible high 51.6; length of lower tooth row 79.3.

SOUHRN

Dne 19. 3. 2006 byla v ranních hodinách v blízkosti silniční komunikace v kú. Podolí (okr. Uherské Hradiště, 194 m n. m., 49° 02' N, 17° 31' E; mapovací kvadrát – 6971) nalezen kadáver dospělého samce šakala obecného (*Canis aureus*) vážícího 11,5 kg. Druhá determinace byla potvrzena přítomností charakteristických tělesných a lebečních znaků (délka ocasu, sroslá bříška prostředních prstů na předních končetinách, tvar proximální části nosních kostí, tvar orbitálních výběžků aj.). K dispozici je dokonalá fotodokumentace nalezeného jedince. Na základě zjištěných skutečností lze konstatovat, že se jedná o první doložený případ výskytu šakala obecného v České republice.

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