

# Nature trail "Oborou Hvězda", information board No.12 - Hvězda Game-Preserve and Hunting

( [Obora Hvězda a myslivost](#) - informace v českém jazyce)

In the past, the term game-preserve had a number of meanings, depending on the purpose and specialization thereof. In the 15 th and 16 th centuries, the synonym "animal garden" was regularly used, documented contemporarily as "Thiergarten", which later prevailed. Most map and correspondence documents dated from the 18 th up to the early 20 th century variably use the term "Stern-Thiergarten" for the Hvězda game-preserve.



In relation to the Břevnov Monastery, it is interesting that a game-preserve belonging to this monastery in a non-specified locality is mentioned as early as in 1435, i.e. a long time before the founding of this game-preserve.

Hvězda game-preserve was founded in the early 1530s by Ferdinand I in place of the Malejov woods donated to the Břevnov Monastery upon its establishment in 993. At that time, deer and buck were kept in the game-preserve. Upon the establishment, the game-preserve was named "New Game-Preserve", as opposed to "Old Game-Preserve" in Bubeneč, where Přemysl Otakar II annexed the land plots of the Chotěšov Monastery in the second half of the 13 th century. In 1548, land plots allowing for the creation of a pond were added to the game-preserve in the north-western part, originally belonging to the Liboc fabrica ecclesiae.

Establishing a game-preserve like Hvězda was by no means an exceptional deed at the time. A number of game-preserves were established during the 16 th century, at the time of the game-preserve prosperity. Older game-preserves in other places were rearranged or extended. Game-preserves were established upon the order of the ruler at his royal estates, where he liked to dwell, or they were established by the nobility at their estates.

The end of this century witnesses the formation of a popular location and game-preserve in Brandýs nad Labem, popular with Rudolph II. The third game-preserve in Prague – the Deer Moat – was established during the reign of Rudolph II by way of a transformation of the steep valley of the Brusnice Stream in 1594, but it is very likely that game had been kept in this locality long before that.

The situation of Bohemian game-preserves, and especially the spreading thereof in the following 17 th century was depicted by Bohuslav Balbín (1621-1688) in his ten-volume document mapping the historical varieties of the Bohemian kingdom (Miscellanea historica regni Bohemiae, 1679). He remembered to mention three Prague game-preserves, "in Bubeneč below Prague Castle, the second one at Hvězda, and the third one in the castle orchards".

The forest was still a forest, and the economy mostly focused on animals. It had to be intensive, because the surface area of the game-preserve is not large, and especially at the beginning, there were quite a lot of animals. Regarding the animals kept in the game-preserve, deer and fallow deer of Ovenec (Bubeneč) breed were in a majority. At that time, there was already a pond, perhaps even with fish-nurseries, in the lower part of the game-preserve.

Animals were brought to the game-preserve even during the Thirty Years' War, in periods when there was not much fighting, and new Emperor Ferdinand III organized huntings and banquets here always in May and June. The game-preserve started to recover slowly after the Thirty Years' War. More animals were brought in. According to a 1652 Urbarium, fallow deer from the game-preserve Zámecký vrch by Zbiroh were brought to the Hvězda game-preserve. New trees were planted in the game-preserve, and by the end of the year, Ferdinand III welcomes German electors in the game-preserve, organizing hunting and festivities for them, in order to appeal to them for the benefit of his son in the upcoming assembly in Regensburg. In 1656, large hunting events and festivities in the game-preserve are documented, celebrating the birth of Leopold, Ferdinand's second son. The date of the next large hunting event has also been documented (28 March 1660). From 12 August 1661 on, control over the Hvězda game-preserve was entrusted to the Bohemian Chamber.

Charles VI was crowned as King of Bohemia on 5 September 1723. An interesting report from J. Dienebier dates back to this era, in which he suggested shooting out of the excessive fallow deer herds, selling the meat, and dig a new pond at Hvězda for the money earned.

Periods of indigence and efforts to improve efficiency brought about the establishment of fields in the game-preserve. Before being taken over by the military treasury, the game-preserve was entrusted for utilization to the supreme hunter František Václav, Count Clary-Aldringen (1760-1767) and Josef Jan Maximilian, Count Kinský (1767-1780).

The pleasure house was taken over by the Austrian military treasury upon the order of Emperor Joseph II, who visited the game-preserve in 1779, and it was turned into a gun powder storage. This was the reason why the game-preserve supervisor (Anseher)

appointed by the supreme hunter, and no longer by the building authority, was not allowed to shoot ground game at Hvězda. For a long time, this meant a limitation to hunting in the game-preserve. It was only in January 1865 that 8 rabbits and 1 partridge were shot during a hunting event at Hvězda. A year later, there were 5 rabbits shot during a January hunting event attended by 9 hunters and 11 gamedrivers, whereas only 2 rabbits and 1 pheasant were shot during the next hunt.

In the 1990s, there were reports of one piece of roe deer, several pheasants and rabbits being observed at Hvězda.

Nature trail "Oborou Hvězda":

10. [Hvězda Game Preserve](#)

11. [Hvězda Game Preserve and Hunting](#) ( [Obora Hvězda a myslivost](#) - informace v českém jazyce)