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# Some slaughter characteristics of the mallard (*Anas p. platyrhynchos*, L. 1758)

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***ABSTRACT***

*Three subspecies of the mallard (Anas p. platyrhynchos, L. 1758) are typical nesting birds in the Holarctic. The mallard is our most important warefowl and will probably keep this position in the future. Because of the very few literature sources it seemed to be reasonable to examine the so called important poultry-industrial characteristics of the mallard in both sexes, like the carcass weight, valuable meat (carcass) parts, slaughter losses etc Altogether 24 mallards shot were examined. After the wet placking the carcasses were opened, eviscerated and dissection according to the method used in poultry processing (Jensen, 1983). The body weight (shot) and weight of brest and thighs with skin as well as the weight of brest fillet and thigh fillet were weighed. The average values of the carcass weight for the two sexes were ♂1228±160 g; ♀1058±98 g. The weight data of the breast with skin were 256±33 g in drakes and 239±36 g in ducks($p<0.05$). The breast fillet weight were 167±28 g and 153±24 g respectively. The weight data of the thighs with skin were 138±14 g in drakes and 119±12 g in ducks. The weight data of the thigh fillet were ♂80±12 g and ♀65±6 g respectively ($p<0.05$).*
(Keywords: Anas platyrhynchos, mallard, slaughter parameters, breast filet, thigh filet)

## INTRODUCTION

Three subspecies of the mallard are typical nesting birds in the Holarctic. The basicform, *Anas p. platyrhynchos*, L. 1758 hatch in Europe, Asia and North-America. It is widely dispersed on our continent occurring everywhere in the advantageous biotopes. The European stock is more than 8 Million specimens *Rose-Scott*, cit. *Faragó* (2002) what was stated to be a stable (constant) population by *Tucker* and *Heath*, cit. *Faragó* (2002), however *Cramp* (1984) and *Aubrecht* and *Holzer* (2000) give account of a 4–5 Million stock size for the Western Palearctic. In Hungary mallard is common in every watery biotope and overdispersed during migration and wintering if the wether conditions are optimal. The Hungarian breeding stock was estimated to be 100–150 thousand pairs by *Magyar et al*., cit. *Faragó* (2002).

The mallard is our most important warefowl and will probably keep this position in the future. The annual bag is varying between 60–90 thousand specimens (*Csányi* cit. *Faragó*, 2002). Due to the bird's abundance beside its importance in the game management, it is an important pray for many predators according to *Ruiz-Olmo* and *Marsol* (2002).

In regard of the above mentioned circumstances and in the knowledge of the very few literature sources it seemed to be reasonable to examine the so called important poultry-industrial characteristics of the mallard in both sexes, like the valuable meat

(carcass) parts, slaughter losses etc. as well as the species role in the predators' food-menu. The investigation of this later subject is undergoing but not viewed in this article.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Altogether 24 mallards shot in several (dawn) on the water dum of the Tapsony Hunting Club (Somogy County, Hungary) in October 2005 were examined. The total bag consisted 7 drake and 17 duck.

The birds (carcasses) were processed in the special room for poultry experimental slaughter of the Department of Poultry- and Pet Breeding of the University of Kaposvár. After the wet placking the carcasses were opened, eviscerated and dissection according to the method used in poultry processing (*Jensen*, 1983). The body weight (shot) and weight of brest and thighs with skin as well as the weight of brest fillet and thigh fillet were weighed to the nearest gramm on a digital scales.

The carcass weight and the slaughter characteristics data were analysed by independent samples T-test using the SPSS 10.0 For Windows (1999) statistical program package.

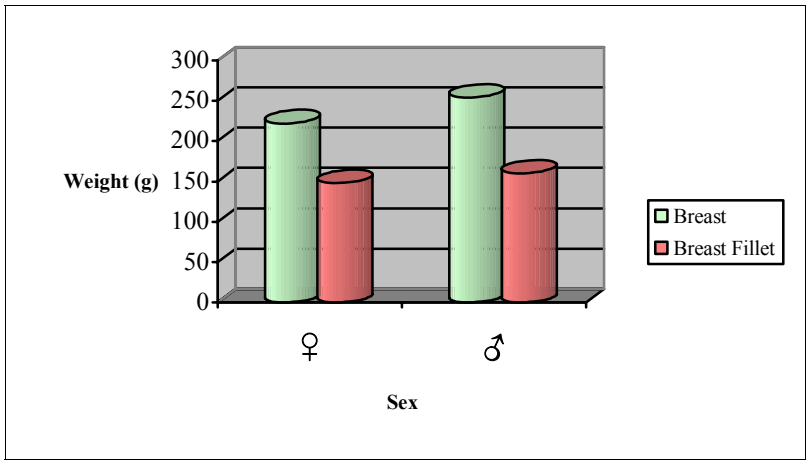
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The carcass weight

The average values of the carcass weight for the two sexes – ♂1228±106 g; ♀1058±98 g – falled between the ranges of the adult liveweight values, found in the literature (*Cramp*, 1984). The liveweight data are comparable with the shot (dead) weight data by our opinion, because there is no loss practically in the weight of the bird body killed by small shot (pellett). The 15% difference experienced between the averages of the two sexes is also well suits with the literature data.

**Figure 1**

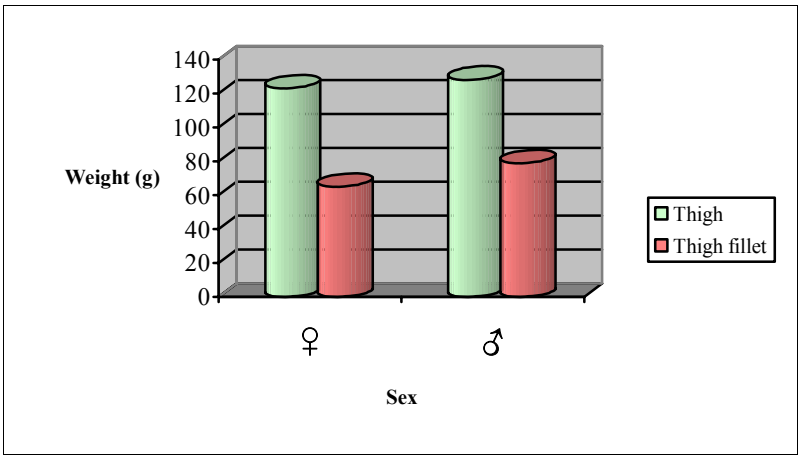
**Development of the weight of breast (with skin and bone) and breast fillet in both sexes in mallard**



The weight data of the breast in skin were 256±33g in drakes and 239±36g in ducks. The difference between the sexes cannot prove significantly. These data are among the ones given by *Golze* and *Damme* (2001): 309 g and 272 g; and those of *Golze* and *Schröder* (2001): 207 g and 201 g (*Figure 1*). The breast fillet weight were 167±28g in drakes and 153±24g in ducks respectively also without significant difference.

**Figure 2**

**Development of the weight of thighs (with skin and bone) and thighs fillet in both sexes in mallard**




The weight data of the thighs with skin were 138±14 g in drakes and 119±12 g in ducks (*Figure 2*). The difference between the sexes was not significant statistically. These data are below the ones (those) found in the literature: 153:131 g (*Golze* and *Damme*, 2001); and 145:134 g *Golze* and *Schröder* (2001). However these records originate from a stock of intensively reared 8 week old mallards.

The weight data of the thigh fillet were 80±12 g in drakes and 65±6 g in ducks respectively. The difference between the two sexes cannot prove significantly.

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