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Picture 1. In the Iokanga river-lake system the cloudberry (*moroshka)* ripens in the first half of August.

August began with relatively stable warm weather. At times day temperatures reached up to 30°C, but most of the days stayed at about 24°C. Southern winds blew with changing speed, mercifully chasing away blood-sucking insects for most of the day. Brief showers

Picture 2. A colorful rainbow marks the end of yet another summer shower.

intervened, facilitating the rapid growth and ripening of numerous kinds of berries and mushrooms.

At this time, according to plan, the NOMAD team was back to the Ketkozero camp, getting ready for the start of the autumn migration. The first group of deer was not late to come: it passed Ketkozero Lake and continued its way to the forest zone on 3rd August, using a short spell of insect-free weather and trying to keep to high ground. The abundance of mushrooms was a primary motivating factor for this early movement back to the woods.

As reindeer herders predicted, such early migrating groups of reindeer would quickly get back to the open tundra, once the weather calmed down and a second wave of insects attacked. After the mosquitoes, it is the midge (*moshka)* that now came on the scene. The tiny insects bite the tender skin around the eyes of the animals, swelling the tissue and impairing vision. An even more dangerous enemy comes in the form of gadflies (*ovod*) which can make deer stampede for hours until they are fully exhausted. Both of these insect species, the warble and the skin fly, are strongly dependent on weather conditions, being especially sensitive to wind. Most favorable for them is calm and wet weather of the kind that descends before it starts to rain. For humans the bite is very painful as we both were able to register.

Picture 3. Mushrooms and insects are the major factors that influence reindeer migratory behavior in August. The most attractive mushrooms are of the *Boletus* species, as the mushroom in the foreground (*krasnogolovik*).

Our observations of reindeer behavior in the first half of August confirmed what we had encountered previously. We now have strong reasons to outline a pattern, according to which migration in the central part of the Kola Peninsula is very far from a clean and tidy picture of unidirectional movement of an imaginary monolithic herd. In reality, we can observe differential movements of many different groups and often – of individual animals. Moreover, the migration of many parts of this aggregate herd would follow at times a zigzag course between forest and open tundra, the direction being motivated by seasonal factors, such as the search for mushrooms and avoidance of insects noted above. From the point of view of a researcher, using the NOMAD field methods, i.e. following closely the movements of deer and people, the picture that emerges is one of complexity, often resisting ordering and explanation.

Recognizing such complexity, we tentatively put forward the following general outline. Every single deer would move along a complex course that receives stronger individual contours in summer time and in what is nominally defined as summer pastures. In winter time, group behavior is paramount, as is well known. What is less readily noted, however, is that at any given season one may find groups or individual animals not where they are supposed to be on the grazing territory. Moreover, before they settle for either summer or winter pastures, the groups or individuals may oscillate between forest and tundra many times, using favorable chances, or avoiding dangers. In the final account it can be safely said, that with the type of very lax herding that prevails in Central Kola, a deer can freely move between the summer and winter pastures many more than the expected two times per year, and that can easily happen irrespectively of season.

As we have encountered during previous fieldwork, many expected winter time round-ups of reindeer have failed because of a sudden movement of a herd toward the Barents Sea coast (the summer pastures). Reindeer herders, the local experts of reindeer behavior, usually explain such movement with weather factors, or simply reindeer will, often not wishing to risk any reasonable explanation. Herders well recognize the fact that there are too many variables that may influence a reindeer decision of where to go on a territory which is characterized by relatively short distances between forest and tundra. With an

ability to cross distances of up to 30 km a day, the longest distance between winter and summer grazing range in Central Kola is 100 km, while the actual zigzagged span is of roughly 50 kms along the longer axis. Or, in other words, should insect pressure in late summer diminish, and mushrooms ripen in the forest, the deer may go mushrooming there for a few days and then get back to the open tundra in case the pressure resumes.

Given this picture of reindeer movement, the reindeer herders of the right wing prefer to wait for reindeer at camps, with rare forays to the tundra, to see where more sizable fragments may have moved. At each herding camp a few herders stay during the summer, observing how many reindeer would pass nearby. From this vantage point they can check when the more mass-scale migration toward the Iokanga line is to start and the time for autumn corralling may be expected to come.

Picture 4. Individual animal crossing briefly into the forest zone in mid-August.

Meanwhile, the main concern of people living in the tundra and the main factor behind human summer movements is berry-picking with pride of place held by the cloudberry (*moroshka*). Cloudberry's high attractiveness lies in its economic importance, it fetches good prices at the numerous gathering points in Lovozero. A major player that utilizes this sub-arctic resource is the Swedish company Norfrys – the same that trades in reindeer meat, as we have described in earlier issues. The price at which people can sell cloudberry to the numerous local small middlemen, located at literally each corner of Lovozero in the summer, reached 90 rubles (approximately EUR 2.70) by mid-August. The profitability is increased by the fact that the berries are watery and heavy, i.e. easily making up "weight". Herders from Brigade 1 of Krasnoshchel'e complained that although cloudberry is abundant this summer, it is more difficult than usual to pick it, because of the late spring frosts damaging the frail white blossoms.

Despite such mishaps the movement of people around the herding camps was mainly subjected to the task of picking as much of the berry as could be transported to the village, where some part went for making preserves, but the greater part was to be sold for instant cash. All the trips of the *vezdekhody* of the Cooperative, made officially for providing building materials for the ongoing repairs of huts and corrals, were so planned as to utilize the best possible timing for picking and transporting the berries. This included also two helicopter trips, provided by the Forest Preservation Unit (*Lesookhrana*) sent out to scout for possible forest fires.

While it may seem that picking of berries is not a factor of importance for reindeer herding per se, it is of more direct relation than commonly expected in at least two ways. First of all, because being employed as a herder gives access to more plentiful berry resources than the non-herding residents of Lovozero can enjoy. This also includes free of charge transportation to the village, either by *vezdekhod*, or more rarely – by helicopter. Secondly, it is a fringe source of cash, which is not to be ignored given the low salaries paid irregularly by the Cooperative. Finally, it is an occupation that characterizes principally the behavior of herders in August, instead of that role being played by properly herding activities. The fact that the Cooperative leadership condones

this state of affairs and tacitly, but effectively supports it, highlights the recognition of the fact that the Cooperative is seen as a community supportive entity over and above any economic rationale propelling its activities.

Picture 5. Reindeer herders from Brigade 8 alarm us that a person “had run away into the tundra” and got lost in an delirious state after excessive drinking. The occasion was the arriving of two *vezdekhody* from the village to the herding camp.

In the first days of August a tragic incident occurred as part of the berry-oriented movements of the herding community. One evening, shortly after our return from the trip to the summer pastures, two reindeer herders from Brigade 8 visited us. They asked us to phone urgently the administration of the Cooperative and raise the alarm that a person had disappeared from Herding Camp 1. As it became clear later, the man was not an

employee of “Tundra”, but had simply followed his friend, a herder from Brigade 1, possibly with the intention that they collect and sell berries together. To our greatest sorrow, the lost person never turned up in subsequent days and weeks, neither attempts by the herders to find him bore any fruit. The accident was reported to the police, but as herders shared with us, the usual police practice is to send their representative in a helicopter only when a dead-body is eventually discovered. According to the herders, this is the fourth such incident in recent years. By mid-August, the lost person, Alexander Riabkov of Lovozero, 33, was declared lost for good by the herders. “He is as good as buried”, they said (“*My ego uzhe pokhoronili”*).

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