

The Gundog Project

[In italiano qui](#)

The Gundog Research Project is a scientific research focusing on gundogs actively used for hunting and field trials. The project has been tailored on pointing dogs, but we are accepting contributions from spaniels and retrievers owners as well. The project stems from two elements: my love for gundogs and, on a more practical side, the need to write a research dissertation to graduate in Veterinary Medicine. Writing a dissertation is mandatory in Italy and, as it might require months of research, I opted to devote them to something I like, and from which animals and humans could benefit . Dogs have always played a huge role in my life, and certainly helped me to grow into a better person, this is how I am trying to give them something back.

Animal behaviour is intimately linked with animal welfare which, on its turn, is affected by animal management. Most of the animal welfare studies carried on so far, focus on farm animals. Furthermore, working dogs such as hunting and field trials dogs, cannot even be considered “pets”. They are canine athletes, they have their own peculiar needs and they are among the few dogs that can truly be considered working animals. As far as my tutors and I are aware, there is no scientific literature available on hunting and field trial dogs management and welfare: the studies we could find are centered on military, police and shelter dogs and on dogs for the blind. Feel free to [e-mail us](#) if you want to know more about the project scientific design and about the scientific literature behind it.

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The team behind the project

Some of you already know me, but I am going to introduce myself again to make you feel at ease. My academic background

is the following: I have a Laurea Specialistica (equivalent of an MA) in Foreign Languages and Literatures (British Literature) earned with a grade of 110/110 cum laude from the [University of Pavia](#) (Italy); a Certificate of Asian Studies earned with Distinction from [Mount Holyoke College](#) (Massachusetts, USA) and I am going to graduate in [Veterinary Medicine](#) from the University of Milan (Italy). I also attended the Italian Veterinary Acupuncture Society School and several extracurricular courses on dog behaviour, neuroscience, wildlife management, writing, photography and more.

Work & Hobbies: I started writing about dogs and hunting in 2002, became a professional journalist in 2005 and published two books on dogs. At the moment I am still freelancing for Italian and foreign magazines and my pieces can be read in each issue of Sentieri di Caccia, Beccacce che Passione and Cinghiale che Passione. I have been active around dogs since my childhood, volunteered at a no-kill dog shelter for five years and got my first English Setter in 1999, my first shooting license came in 2004. Years have passed, but I still enjoy the countryside, training, trialing, rough shooting and anything gundogs related. I currently manage the blog [Dogs & Country](#)

My supervisors in this project are Professor [Silvana Mattiello](#) and Professor [Clara Palestini](#), one of the few veterinarians who obtained a diploma from the [European College of Animal Welfare and Behavioural Medicine](#). Both teach and research at the [School of Veterinary Medicine](#), University of Milan (Italy).

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