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The Call of the Domesticated

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Wild Food: The Call of the Domestic

Ken Albala

In the late Middle Ages wild foods were among the most esteemed items on banquet menus, primarily game and wild fowl but also fish, wild fruits and vegetables. By the 18th century we find domesticated meats, especially veal and even beef, cooped and fattened capons and cultivated vegetables as the focus of elegant dining. Some species had disappeared altogether from the dining room, many wild fowl and sea mammals in particular, but also smaller four-footed creatures. Something had changed during the intervening centuries. Among the factors that may have influenced this turn of fortune were a growing population, shrinking acreage of uncultivated land and the growth of cattle rearing that ultimately caused the range of wild foods to diminish. There may also have been a deeper cultural and intellectual shift that relegated a few wild animals to exclusive hunting and all other wild species to marginalization as control over nature, taming and even, to paraphrase Francis Bacon, bending her to our will, became the conceptual ideal.

There are very obvious economic reasons why the general food supply would have been more dependent on production of domesticated species. A rising demand for food due to demographic pressure can only have been met by increasing output and cultivating or grazing more land. There was also a greater percentage of the population living in cities, more legal restrictions on hunting and collecting food in the wild. Ultimately there was a more dependable supply of cultivated plants and domesticated animals, particularly in northern Europe. For wild fowl the reduction of nesting grounds due to agricultural sprawl imperilled their reproductive cycles. These factors cannot be discounted, but there are other equally interesting cultural reasons for a shift. The change in mentality may have been triggered by these material factors, or one could say conversely that a new relationship to nature and the willingness to subdue and master it for the benefit of humans is what ultimately led to the economic and social changes. This is a matter of ideological chicken or material egg. Whichever, there was a reduction of the number and variety of wild foods normally consumed by Europeans between the late middle ages and the 18th century. For some reason people came to prefer domestic animals and plants to wild ones.

This was also the case among elite diners, though certain wild species never lost popularity. It is nonetheless true that chefs and their patrons consciously chose whiter and lighter meats, blander vegetables, and generally more soft and delicate foods in smaller cuts over what they increasingly saw as rough food unperfected by art. Veal and capon were the rising stars in 16th- and 17th-century cooking. For many, to consume dark rough and gamey food, was in a sense to become wild and

uncultivated. This may itself have been an exciting diversion from the normal order of courtly behaviour, not only running wild in the forest on the hunt, and satisfying one's primal urges, but sating the taste for blood. It seems that such a desire would only be pronounced in a culture where such food was somewhat of a transgression of the norm. This may explain why some hunted wild animals, boar and venison in particular, remained popular while others disappeared entirely.

Of course, in many places only the landed nobility were allowed to hunt venison; that had always been the case. Thus the de-emphasis on game may be due to the broadening audience of cookbooks, increasingly written for urban élites or, later, even bourgeois readers. These books would have necessarily offered fewer recipes for game. The social class of the intended reader thus played a major role in the frequency of recipes for wild foods. For the cookbooks examined here in the 16th and 17th century, the audience is still primarily courtly or landed gentry, people with access to untamed land and thus venison and many wildfowl remain.

Apart from the cookbooks and banquet management guides, there are also references to wild food in other types of culinary literature, most notably natural histories, dietary literature, and herbals. Expectedly, agricultural texts are relatively silent on the topic. These sources often reveal those species that were once common but have fallen from favour on élite tables, and are especially valuable because they write as outsiders and usually for an academic audience, and were primarily interested in relaying facts rather than impressing with elaborate recipes and descriptions of banquets. Thus sometimes the wild food that was once esteemed and had since gone out of fashion can only be found in this type of food literature.

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Beginning with cookbooks, medieval sources show that people enjoyed an extraordinary range of wild species. Hunting was a favourite pastime of the leisured classes and various species of deer (roe buck, fallow deer and red deer), boar and wild fowl were served and even offered as presents to relatives or to gain political favour. Patronage networks were sustained by presents of this sort. Professional hunters were also employed to bring in fresh game and may have been kept permanently employed on a noble estate. From late-medieval menus, in England for example, we learn that venison with frumenty (boiled whole grain) was a regular centrally featured item as were swans, herons, cranes and the stereotypical boar's head.¹ At royal weddings and affairs of state such items were absolutely necessary. These were often served simply roasted or according to cookbooks such as the French *Viandier*, venison was parboiled, larded and then simmered in wine, or set in a pastry shell with plenty of spices and perhaps served with a cinnamon-based sauce.² In 14th-century English manuscripts roe deer or boar is parboiled, chopped into pieces, and boiled in water and wine, thickened with bread and blood, spiced and then finished off with vinegar and raisins.³ In Italy Martino Rossi offers a civet of venison which is parboiled with vinegar, fried and served with a sauce of raisins, almonds, bread, wine, cinnamon, ginger and onion.⁴ All these were typical medieval flavour combinations.

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In the end though, there are not that many recipes for game in medieval cookbooks. Although the stereotype of the huge beast turning on a spit at every medieval feast is certainly overplayed, when a large animal was killed there would have been a desire to present it intact to show it off. This may account for the paucity of recipes, especially when compared to the lowly chicken which a chef would not hesitate to pound, reshape and disguise. Since roasting and simmering were fairly simple procedures a professional chef would not need a recipe.⁵ Keeping in mind that medieval cookbooks were always written for professionals in a kind of culinary shorthand and rarely give explicit measurements or detailed instructions, this may be why simple venison recipes rarely appear. It does not reflect a lack of popularity.

The relative status of venison, which then meant any hunted large wild mammal, not just deer, did not change significantly from the late medieval period into the 16th century. In fact it may have increased in prestige because rarer and increasingly confined to enclosed parks. Recipes abound straight through the 17th century, especially where owning land remained the economic and cultural ideal, that is, practically everywhere in Western Europe.

But game animals were only one part of the entire category of wild foods. A few wild foods were associated with the lowest classes, gathered only by those at the margins of subsistence or during famine. Hence we find reference to vetches, darnel and lupins, normally considered weeds among grains, eaten by starving peasants. In some places there was a stigma against eating chestnuts, especially putting them into bread as was done in the Cévennes. Surprisingly, few wild foods were explicitly associated with poverty and at the start of the early modern period it is clear that there was no particular aversion to wild foods, a remarkably wide variety of which were eaten, especially wild fowl and fish which were among the most desirable and frequently offered menu items.

Many small wild animals were also considered viable food. References to such creatures can be found throughout cookbooks of the period; they absolutely abound in the dietary literature. Hare and rabbit are always mentioned, but so too are hedgehog and fox, especially those that have been fattened up on autumn grapes. The Paduan physician Antonio Gazius includes in his list of wild meats, even though he generally disapproves of them, wild donkeys, mountain goats and gazelle which are best cooked in oil to temper their heat.⁶ Melchior Sebizius describes how bears are usually prepared: they are skinned, hung to tenderize, salted and seasoned with fennel cinnamon and cloves and served as an appetizer.⁷ Martino of Como preferred them in pies, and Scappi admits that though uncommon, he has cooked them. The limbs roasted are the best part.⁸

Dormice, as we know, were a favourite among ancient Romans, but their descendants centuries later also enjoyed them. Messisbugo and others included dormice on their menus.⁹ Bruyerin says in the Auvergne people eat squirrels and Poles serve them at banquets.¹⁰ Porcupines were used in pâtés or roasted on a spit larded and stuck with cloves.¹¹ Sebizius commends the musky fragrant odour of the flesh of marten (a weasel-like creature), and definitely prefers it to fox.¹² In the Alps marmots were roasted or made into

a black broth based on their own blood. Badgers (*Taxus*) are reported in in Savonarola; Gesner says they're cooked with pears. Beaver tail was also served in more elegant dinners, especially for Lent,¹³ because 'Carnem comede Pontificos est concessum', that is, because always in water, this part of the animal could be considered fish.

One particularly perverse fashion among élites involved removing the unborn foetus of a deer and cooking it. 'This was invented either by gluttonous men or to be something elegant, not because it's pleasant or healthy, but uncommon and acquired at a high price', claimed Domenico Sala.¹⁴ Petrus Castellanus attests to the same fashion and adds that young stags' horns have also become popular as delicacies on noble tables, just when they begin to poke through. Normally they were boiled and the soft interior removed and served, or they were grated and boiled to make hartshorn jelly.¹⁵ Most of these references come from 17th-century dietary works, and they usually condemn practices they found aberrant or unhealthy. They do suggest however that these wild foods were disappearing or were only eaten in extremely remote places or by courtly gluttons with jaded palates and a taste for the perverse. They do not appear at all in élite banquets by the 17th century, but had in earlier cookbooks. That is, in the course of these centuries small furry wild creatures went from viable if rare menu items to strange and perverse foods.

The diminution of wildfowl species is even clearer. The range of wild fowl presented on élite tables in the late Middle Ages and 16th century was simply staggering. There were wild geese and ducks and many waterfowl such as cranes, swans, storks, herons (Sebizius says, 'Truly Princes and Magnates love to hunt them.'¹⁶) The lists of small wildfowl regularly served are seemingly endless. The familiar pheasant, partridge, wild doves appear and even starlings, quail, fig-peckers, sparrows, and tiny thrushes. Snipes would be roasted whole with guts intact, which were later squeezed out on toast.¹⁷ By the 17th century fewer and fewer species were eaten, particularly the waterfowl. Swan's flesh was found to be dark and malodorous, even wild ducks and teals were thought to taste like the pond muck they consumed. The preference shifted toward whiter and lighter fleshed fowl, which could include pheasant but was more likely capon or turkey.

Wild herbs were another set of common ingredients in this cuisine. The term usually referred to anything not classified as a garden vegetable (*olera*) and included wild greens, cresses, skirrets (*Sium sisarum*), samphire (*Crithmum maritimum*), eringoos (sea holly roots), water caltrops, nettles whose red spring buds went into pottage,¹⁸ mallows (*Malva sylvestris*), and wild onions. It also included herbs in our sense of the word, as culinary seasonings. It is difficult to tell when an herb was grown in a garden, but authors do sometimes specify wild thyme, or note where a certain herb can be found, denoting that it would not be in the kitchen garden. The use of herbs is not as important as it would become in subsequent centuries, but chefs did use parsley and mint extensively as well as flowers such as fennel, elder, borage and violets. Myrtle and bay could also have been collected wild. Wild thistles were used as a curdling agent for making cheese in place of rennet, and Englishman Thomas Cogan recommends blessed

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thistle leaves in the morning on bread and butter.¹⁹ He also suggests many wild herbs for medicinal as well as culinary uses – the root of the herb avens was used in stew: although it turns it black, it gives it the taste of cloves.²⁰

Gathering wild herbs for a salad seems to have been common among all social classes. Cardano mentions rustics and women gathering wild endive (*Condrilla*) and sow thistle. These were not eaten out of desperation but for pleasure. He also mentions mallow shoots as a first course. Naturally noblemen would have their servants do the actual gathering, sometimes with grave results. Cardano mentions a case he saw of a Bolognese nobleman whose female servant accidentally put hemlock in a tart instead of parsley. The following night the nobleman was dead.²¹ When Europeans became so frightened of such mistakes that they turned away from gathering wild herbs that might be poisonous is difficult to determine, but clearly warnings like this would have helped to dissuade people from doing so.

Salvatore Massonio in his book on salads mentions the ‘*mescolanza rustica*’ which he explains is a popular wild salad among noblemen, so called either because the people who usually eat it are rustics or because the herbs themselves are rustic or wild.²² The impetus to eat such things was much like dressing up as shepherds and playing at pastoral, piping and dancing among the woodland nymphs and other such nonsense. Eating rustic wild foods was one part of this whole diversion

With the popularity and availability of sugar, honey went almost completely out of fashion in 16th-century cooking. Not that honey was truly a wild product, but the relationship of these two sweeteners is revealing. It appears though that once sugar became ubiquitous and was used among ordinary people, honey regained a certain vogue, especially in 17th-century England where it was made into mead. Rarity of honey may have had something to do with this. Apparently many monastic bee-keeping operations disappeared during the Reformation and bee-keeping became one of those noble rustic pastimes, perhaps following Virgil’s *Georgics*, the fourth book of which is about the topic. Among authors such as Kenelm Digby, recipes for mead and quasi-medicinal drinks, much like the ancient Hippocratic concoctions, were passed around and published as a nobleman’s personal invention. At any rate, the rarity of a wild food, or in this case managed, since the honey itself was not taken from wild bees, can bring it into fashion.

Collecting wild fruit was also considered noble. Cultivating fruit was of course a popular pastime, but only those with substantial stretches of wasteland could march off into the forest for a rustic picnic, Bacchic revel, or a day picking berries. Wild fruits including cornel cherries, sorb apples, service berries, *mespila*, *arbutus* (Strawberry tree), *uva ursi*, *uva crisper* and especially tiny wild strawberries were very fashionable. *Vaccinia* (whortleberries) along with the others were gathered and usually made into preserves, syrups or ‘*sapori*’ which were sauces used as condiments. There is no way to tell who actually did the dirty work of making these confections, though recipe books are addressed to elite readers, they could have left the messy job

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of collecting and cooking to servants. In any case, there was something titillating and daring about eating such wild foods precisely because in the course of the early modern period they became increasingly out of the ordinary. Most meals would be made up of domestic plants and animals and for those cooped up at court and in the city, the rustic diversion on one's own estate or *villa suburbana* provided a pleasant but ultimately safe way to escape into the wild.

Without doubt the largest category of wild foods was fish. Nearly all fish had to be wild, with the exception of a few species that could be raised in ponds, eels and fresh water carp for example, although these were probably caught wild and then stocked in ponds rather than bred in captivity as hatchlings. Of course, most fish are still wild. What makes this cuisine so different is the incredible variety of fish that were eaten. In fact, many cookbooks and practically all dietary guides spend a great deal of energy just straightening out the various names for fish, whether ancient or alternate names in dialect.

In the late Middle Ages and into the Renaissance dolphins and whales were consumed, and were considered fish. At some point thereafter they disappeared from elegant tables entirely. It may be that their numbers dwindled in European waters and they became too difficult to bring home fresh. (Cogan says of 'porpuis' – 'Although for rareness they be esteemed of great estates.'²³) It seems unlikely that some sudden realization that these are intelligent mammals had anything to do with growing aversion. Many other intelligent mammals were eaten happily. But the fact remains that sea mammals did disappear from elite tables during the early modern period.

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We must not forget other aquatic creatures which were among the dainties served at noble tables. Frogs, often eaten whole, turtles – which grew in popularity once they were brought back from the Caribbean, as well as snails must also be in the list of wild foods.

Admittedly, many of the stranger wild foods appeared rarely in elite cookbooks. Nonetheless, given the high proportion of recipes for wild birds and fish, it is undeniable that wild foods played a major role in aristocratic cuisine in the 16th century. For example in the summary of all foods that can be used in banquets, divided by lean and meat days, Domenico Romoli lists 169 recipes based on wild ingredients out of 301 specifically for lean days, which includes every main dish without meat, any pie, pastry, soup or pasta based on fish, vegetables, or fruit. Of those recipes containing meat, 68 of 360 are based on wild ingredients.²⁴ These numbers are based on the primary ingredient, and it is assumed that fish are captured and fruits are usually cultivated, unless specified. For many items it is specified, as with *oche salvatiche* (wild goose) or *piccioni casalenghi* (domestic pigeon). Mushrooms and truffles were necessarily wild. There are some items whose source can not be determined, so these numbers can not be precise. Nonetheless wild foods account for more than half of the dishes eaten in Lent and about a fifth of meals on meat days. The proportion among meats seems to be the result of a wide variety of dishes made from specific parts of

domestic animals such as head, liver, tongue, etc., of veal.

Bartolomeo Scappi was a bit more enthusiastic about wild foods. His fish recipes are again, mostly wild, but he also offers far more recipes based on wild fowl. With 1000 recipes in his cookbook a statistical analysis would be impractical. Suffice to say, Scappi had no aversion at all to the idea of wild food. There are about 10 wild boar recipes, about twice the number for deer of various types, a handful of recipes specifying wild duck, four for porcupine and even a recipe for guinea pig.²⁵

Rossetti in his list of all possible dishes for banquets offers 3 boar recipes, 11 for deer, 14 for crane, 26 for hare, 35 for wild duck, which he specifies (there is even a recipe for their tongues smoked),²⁶ 57 for pheasant and partridge together, and 4 for guinea pig: roasted, in a fricassée, baked in an oven, grilled and with French mustard. Mountain goat he says to cook like mutton (*castrato*)²⁷ On the other hand, peacocks did not interest him much. He says cook it like turkey or serve it re sewn into its feathers, but that is a dish more antique than modern.²⁸ Among wild foods sturgeon takes precedence with no less than 202 recipes based on the flesh, milt, liver or caviar.²⁹

In the early 17th century, Cesare Evtascandalo's enthusiasm for game is as strong as his predecessors. Although the actual menus he presents rarely specify game, he does have separate entries for many wild species. Rabbits are stuffed with fruits and roasted or stewed with the same, placed in a pie, either hot or cold, cooked or alive. The latter was an old trick, though how the rabbits jumping around the table could rouse laughter time and time again one can only guess.³⁰ Although the medical advice Evtascandalo includes is rarely very favourable toward wild animals, he still includes, along with 14 ways to cook boar and 9 for hare, entries for dormouse which sound very enticing stuffed with chestnuts, pine nuts and spices or roasted and served on toast.³¹ There are also dishes featuring porcupine, hedgehog and guinea pig. As usual, wild fowl and fish are given prominence.

In Spain Francisco Martínez Montañó's *Arte de Cocina* (1611) while heavily dependent on domestic meats such as mutton, kid, sucking pig and ham, chicken, also makes extensive use of wild foods. Hare and rabbit are presented in numerous guises. Boar appears whole or in pieces roasted, the head is made into head-cheese, the flesh is also put into *empanadas* and other pastries.³² Venison is served in just as many ways, roasted, its horns on a plate, breadcrumbs (*migas*) fried in venison fat, *empanadas*, salted and even a version of venison jerky (*tasajos*).³³

Lancelot de Casteau also, writing in the early 17th century in Liège, has a *Heuspot de venaison* made from boar or stag, which is essentially the medieval standby of meat in a sauce of toast, pepper and nutmeg, sugar and cinnamon with red wine and onions fried in butter, all boiled together.³⁴ Even his English pie is made of goat or lamb or a piece of fat venison which is offered as an alternative rather than the standard ingredient.³⁵ The rest of the cookbook is almost completely dependent on veal, beef, pork and other domestic species, as would be expected from a highly urban audience. It is only at the grandest banquet served for the entry of the Prince-Archbishop in 1557 that a

variety of venison, boar, hare, cranes and swans and other such wild foods appear with frequency.³⁶ This seems to be more of a historical curiosity for his audience and not something they would be likely to cook, judging from the actual recipes in the book.

Gradually, recipes for game diminish and by the latter half of the 17th century the dominance of domestic species is apparent in most cookbook authors. Some wild foods retain their noble status, but it appears that chefs and their readers were less inclined to cook or serve them.

Bartolomeo Stefani, in the later 17th century, says of wild boar that 'the meat of this animal is very much appreciated by grand Lords, and of this are made various dishes.'³⁷ These words imply that his readers would not be included in this category of grand lords, and that they would be unlikely even to have the opportunity to cook such animals. He does give a recipe for wild boar salami, just in case. Of deer he says that they are rarely found in Italy and proceeds to describe how they are prepared in England. This supports the idea that game was merely over-hunted. Hares, he says, go into many dishes, but he seems more interested in their fur and that many cooks appreciate it to keep warm in cold weather.³⁸

At about the same time, Venantio Mattei offers menus of meals he planned for the Rospigliosi family in Rome through the 1660s. His first, a meal in January for 20 noble ladies and gentlemen, provides good evidence that although wild foods had not disappeared entirely, there were fewer offered. The banquet in five courses included 66 separate dishes (requiring 18 covered platters, 100 large plates and 400 small round ones) and is mostly made up of veal and kid, capon, pigeon or turkey, sturgeon and other fish. Wild foods appear here and there, perhaps thrushes as a garnish to fried sweetbreads, but few dishes feature wild food. In the first course there is hare in a black broth made of prunes, chicken livers, crushed biscuits and pear syrup served in little marzipan baskets touched with sugar glazing and gold – the eighth of 14 dishes in that course. In the second course there is a whole roast pheasant, roasted larks and thrushes. Some of these appear in the next course as well. The fourth course is all fish, presumably wild. Lastly came the fruit course, including vegetables, conserves, olives, cheeses and truffles. Nowhere to be seen are venison or boar, though we know the former was hard to find according to Stefani's testimony.³⁹

The French authors of the later 17th century are a little more ambivalent. In La Varenne there are a good number of recipes for wild food and this may, ironically, betray his conservatism. Teal, larks and woodcocks appear. Even heron is still present. There are several recipes for boar and a few for stag, fawn and roebuck liver.⁴⁰ These dishes are mostly very simply roasted. He no doubt had the opportunity to cook such animals for his patron the Marquis d'Uxelles and anticipated that other chefs working for similar patrons would, too. In other French cookbooks of the later 17th century, wild game plays a smaller and smaller role. Pierre De Lune offers several recipes for stag deer and roe as well as three for roasted boar at the beginning of his *Le Cuisiner* of 1656, followed by a few boar pâtés,⁴¹ but they are not mentioned elsewhere in the

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cookbook.⁴² By 1674, in LSR, wild fowl are still present according to season, but far more dependable chicken, lamb, sucking pig, veal, and even beef, are the mainstays. Boar's head, served cold as in La Varenne, is still there as an *entremets*,⁴³ and a recipe for young boar or *marcassin*,⁴⁴ but he has no interest in venison whatsoever. Again, whether this has to do with a broader and more bourgeois audience or the increasing rarity of wild game cannot be determined, but it does appear that a cultural preference for domestic food may play a role.

Cookbooks, in their aim to be as comprehensive as possible, continue to include wild ingredients, especially the aristocratic deer, boar and wildfowl. But it is clear that the proportion of these foods had diminished and appeared in menus less frequently. There may be underlying cultural reasons for the shift, one of which is clearly discernible in the dietary literature. The relative merit of domestic versus wild meat was a standard topic. Many authors contended that exercise and fresh air rids an animal's body of superfluous humidity and thus makes it leaner, more digestible and ultimately better for you. This was the standard Galenic view: wild meats may be a little tougher but ultimately more nourishing. In the early 16th century this would have been considered medical orthodoxy.

Interestingly, in preceding centuries the opposite view usually held sway. For example, Antonio Gazius in the late 15th century, using Arab authorities, insisted that wild animals were too gross, which here implies dense and dark-fleshed, and therefore generated melancholy. Domestic animals taste better and are more nourishing. Their internal heat is tempered by being well fed, getting a moderate amount of exercise and leading a relatively easy life. The same is true of fowl: 'The domestic nourish more and are more tempered and generate better blood.'⁴⁵ Perhaps this reflects the classical ideal internalized among medieval Arab authors long before it had been in Europe.

In any case, by the early modern period, although lip service is paid to Galen and the Greeks, it is clear that game has diminished in physicians' estimation. Castellanus remarks that of course lamb and kid are easier to digest and preferable to deer and hare. Rather than any specific medical reasoning, the preference for lighter, whiter and softer foods appears to be more a cultural shift than any major theoretical reappraisal. It appears that somehow people lost interest in gamey tastes. Castellanus speaking of the roe deer says that 'the odour especially and noxious flavour of the woods causes nausea, such that it is hardly able to please unless cooked with artifice and condiments to remove the persistent wildness.'⁴⁶ In England, Thomas Cogan exclaims, 'A wonder it is to see how much this unwholesome flesh is desired of all folkes. In so much that many men rashly will venture their credite, yea and sometime their lives too, to steale venision.' He also goes so far as to criticize nobles for wasting so much land for deer parks. 'I could wish (saving the pleasure of honourable and worshipfull men) that there were no Parkes nor Forestes in England. For a great parte of the best pasture in this Realme is consumed with Deer, which might otherwise be

better employed for a common-wealth.⁴⁷ Of course, over the next few centuries his prayers would be answered as more and more land came under cultivation.

It appears that physicians in general came to prefer lighter, whiter and more easily digested meats and this was paralleled in culinary literature. Perhaps physicians influenced elite taste in some way or, more likely, the two developed in the same direction together. A cultural shift seems to play some part in the gradual disappearance of wild species in both genres.

Keith Thomas has argued that reduction of species of wild birds for food in England, although partly due to the reduction of wild space and extinction, has as much to do with the custom of keeping birds for pets. Italians never lost the taste for small birds, and perhaps keeping them as pets was never so widespread as it was in England. Keeping small furred mammals as pets was common in both places and may have some connection to the acquired aversion to eating similar wild animals. This is clearly the case in modern times.⁴⁸ However, it seems unlikely that concern for animal welfare played any major role in the diminishing use of wild foods *per se*. At least such sentiments are extremely rare in culinary literature, and were normally expressed by vegetarians whose aversion was to killing in general, not just wild creatures.

If anything, the preference for domestic foods occurred at a time when most people had less familiarity, domestically or otherwise, with animals rather than more. Fewer people would have had direct experience of untamed space, and it is interesting and odd that it is precisely when they stop killing and eating wild animals very often that they begin to grow fond of wild nature for its own sake. They even begin to plan gardens to look uncultivated. In other words, romanticizing nature in its wild state that begins at the end of the early modern period may be linked directly with ceasing to use wild nature as a resource for food. Only when one stops eating such foods can the idea of preserving them for their own sake develop. Presumably seasoned hunters have no such conceptions of nature. It is the urbane outsider who prefers to dote on swans rather than serve them up.

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Notes

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7. Melchior Sebizius, *De alimentorum facultatibus* (Strasbourg: Johannes Phillipi Mulbii et Josiae Stedellii, 1650), 670-1.
8. Bartolomeo Scappi, *Opera* (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 2002), 42.

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9. Cristoforo di Messisbugo, *Banchetti* (Ferrara: Giovanni de Buglhat and Antonio Hucher, 1549); Libro Novo (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 2001), 4.
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11. Sebizius, 704.
12. Sebizius, 712.
13. Sebizius, 1044.
14. Giovanni Domenico Sala, *De alimentis* (Padua: Io. Bapt. Martinum, 1628 in *Ars Medica*. (Padua: Franciscum Bolzetta, 1641), 58.
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16. Sebizius, 926.
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18. Thomas Cogan, *The Haven of Health* (London: Thomas Orwin, 1589), 87.
19. Cogan, 55.
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25. Scappi, vol. II, 95.
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