

## ABSTRACT

This publication might be defined as a “reference book” of birds of Primorsky Krai (Southern Ussuriland), Russia. This book constitutes an ornithological review of regional bird species, and a bibliography of regional ornithological publications.

Within this book are described the history of ornithological studies conducted in the region, the status and geographical distribution of birds within Primorsky Krai, and also ways and level of conservation of rare species.

Three general periods in the history of ornithological investigations of the region are distinguished. Key achievements, lists of leading researchers, geography of their field work, and main scientific contributions are discussed. Based on the “river basin” approach, the Primorsky Krai territory and coastal waters were divided into 8 sectors, and the level of ornithological knowledge was estimated by 10 parameters for each of them.

Some 483 species of birds are inscribed in the avifauna list; the breeding status of 276 of them has been confirmed. In the latter group there are 5 species, for which breeding has not been detected in the last 30 years, and their local breeding populations may thus be considered extinct (Japanese Crested ibis, Swan Goose, Mute Swan, Great Bustard, Tufted Puffin and Jankowski's Bunting). In addition, 6 very rare species (Japanese Night Heron, White-winged Crake, Grey-headed Lapwing, Crested Murrelet, Rufous Fantail warbler and Japanese Marsh Warbler) are suspected to nest in Primorsky Krai, but up to now this has not been proven. There are 163 species of birds that winter in Primorsky Krai, although the winter sightings of most of these species are infrequent and accidental. Additionally, the Crested Shelduck is present in the given list. This species was formerly recorded in Primorsky Krai from time to time, but now it is believed to be globally extinct. As a supplement, we present a list of 19 species, which were mentioned among the avifauna of Primorsky Krai but were not included in the list above because their detections seemed erroneous or required confirmation. In a separate table that describes birds' distribution, their status is defined in every of the 8 sectors noted above.

In the section dedicated to the issue of avian conservation, we give a brief history of the creation of Red Data Books at different administrative levels, and compose a list of the local birds that are included in the Red Data Books of Japan, China, South Korea, Asia, Primorsky Krai, Khabarovskii Krai, in the IUCN Red List of 2008, as well as the table of rare species of vertebrates living in the Russian Far East (1989). Below there is a list of Primorsky Krai birds protected by the CITES Convention and the bilateral Conventions signed by the Government of the USSR and Japan (in 1973), the USA (in 1984), India (in 1984) and North Korea (in 1987).

The map and the most important data on 5 basic wetlands in Primorsky Krai that have or deserve international status according to the Ramsar Convention (“Lake Khanka”, “Lower Reaches of the Tumen River” (“Tumangan”), “Bikino-Alchanskoye Interfluve”, “Razdolnaya River Delta”, “Verkhovskogo and Karamzina Islands”) are submitted. The list of Primorsky Krai's breeding species is analyzed and shows where they nest within the territories of six Nature Reserves situated throughout the Primorsky Krai.

The bibliographic index lists research papers, which concern Primorsky Krai's birds and were published through the end of 2009, includes 1468 papers. Finally, we composed a vocabulary of scientific names of birds, in which we included the main synonyms of common Russian and English bird names.

This book is meant for zoologists, zoogeographers, environmentalists, and all experts who work in the field of conservation of natural resources, as well as biology students, postgraduate students, higher education lecturers, and school teachers.