

Skokova, N.N., Vinogradov, V.G. 1986. Okhrana mestoobitaniy vodno-bolotnykh ptits [Conservation of natural habitats of waterfowl]. Moscow, Agropromizdat Press. 240 p. In Russ.

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Loons.

Loon meat is unpalatable, but edible. The value is in its skin with feathers from belly, breast and especially the throat area of the Black-throated Loon. It is very nice and is used for making hats and ornaments. In the USSR the loons at the present time are not harvested. There is no special hunting on loons, but there is incidental collecting.

Man's main unfavourable impact on loon population at the present time is nest disturbance and mortality from the fishing nets (birds often perish, being entangled in the fishing nets). Just based on the disturbance factor we can explain the receding to the north of the southern border of the loon distribution in the European part of the USSR. As a result of a severe decline in these regions the Black-throated Loon is listed in the Red Data Books of the Lithuanian SSR and Latvian SSR [56]. However within limits of the huge ranges of loons these factors now have only local significance. Loon numbers in the USSR at present are relatively high and stable, and there is no special protection of them.

Loons winter in the USSR on the Black and Caspian Seas, and also near shores of Sakhalin, Kamchatka and Kuril Islands. Migrations of breeding in the USSR loons have not been studied much. Banding has shown, that the Black-throated loons, breeding in northern half of its range from our western borders to the Lena R. mouth, in autumn in the beginning fly to the west, reaching the Baltic Sea and halting there, and then to south and south-east and spend a winter on the Black Sea. In spring they return by the same route. There are no data on other populations and species of loons. On passages birds fly in small groups and they don't form large flocks.