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The published material on fauna and biology of loons and grebes of Eastern Siberia are quite poor and the majority of literature is in the form of fragmentary communications in different editions. Based on the number of existing special publications of different completeness and newness, dedicated to representatives of these bird groups, it is not clear enough to paint the whole picture of the birds occurrence, distribution, number and mode of life in the biggest natural area. Since the time of publication in the fundamental review "Ptitsy SSSR [Birds of the USSR]" (Kurochkin, 1982; Flint, 1982) of the most detailed information on the status of loons and grebes of the region, over 15 years has passed, and during this time many new data on their distribution and ecology were accumulated. Because of this, the author has attempted to summarize and organize the existing patchy data, including his own data based on long term research.

Data on biology of loons and grebes described in this work cover the territory to the south of Eastern Siberia. The most complete information exists on the shores of Lake Baikal and its basin, including the territory of the Khubsugul Lake area in Northern Mongolia. Besides Buryatia and Irkutsk Region, within borders of the region the adjoining regions are included as well – Tuva, Khakassia, Chita Region and partly, the south of Yakutia.

Gaviiformes.

Two species breed in the region – Red-throated Loon and Black-throated Loon. One species – Yellow-billed Diver – vagrant.

**Red-throated Loon** (*Gavia stellata* Pontoppidan, 1763).

**Status.** Rare breeding migratory species.

**Distribution.** Was observed by Radde (Radde, 1863) "in summer feathers" on Lower Shilka. Molleson (1869) mentions it in the number of birds, occurred in Troitskosavsk surroundings. Neither Dobrinskiy, nor Godlevskiy mentioned it in the fauna of birds of Pribaikalie (Baikal Region) and Zabaikalie (Trans-Baikalia) (Bianki, 1911). At the same time Turov (1924) points at nesting and scarcity of these birds in Verkhnyaya [Upper] Angara and Kichera River deltas, especially near Srednee (Middle) Ust'ye channel (protoka) and Dagary settlement. Shtegman (Shtegmann, 1936) observed a RTLO brood near Kotel'nikovskiy Cape on Baikal Lake. Malyshev (1960) has discovered several specimens in the first half of August on Verkhnee [Upper] Lake, 25 km from the Tompuda Bay. Breeds seldom in Chivyrkui Gulf on Atangatui Lake and Barguzin R. valley (Vorob'yov, 1927; Gagina, 1960a; Nazemnye zhivotnye..., 1989). Gagina (1961) indicates it was nesting in Verkhnyaya [Upper] Angara River valley, north-eastern and western Baikal region, and was observed on migration, and was suggested as breeding in Charskaya and Muiskaya depressions, Bodaibinskiy district (Gagina, 1960b; Izmailov, Khankhasaev, 1959). The RTLO was recorded as a rare breeding bird on the lakes of the coastal lowlands of the north-east shore of the Baikal Lake (Skryabin, Filonov, 1962). Rarely it is observed on Vitim Plateau (Ivano-Arakhleiskie lakes), the nature of the summer occurrences on the water bodies of Stanovoe Nagorie (Stanovoe Upland) is not clear (Izmailov, 1967b). In the south-western Trans-Baikalia it is a rare migrant bird.

It was collected on the passage in Selenga River delta and in August in Barguzin Nature Reserve (Izmailov, Borovitskaya, 1973). Gagina (1961) writes about RTLO as a rare breeding bird in Selenga R. delta, however Shvetsov and Shvetsova (1967) did not find its nests and observed solitary birds only. It was recorded as a rare breeding bird in all zoogeographic provinces of Lake Baikal basin, including the north of Mongolia (Fauna ptits....., 1991). It is widely distributed throughout Yakutia (Vorob'yov, 1963).

**Migration.** Throughout its range, the RTLO is rarely observed in migration (Flint, 1982). There are almost no data on migrations in Eastern Siberia. Molleson (1896) observed the species in the vicinity of Troitskosavsk at the end of April-beginning of May. On Lunkha River (Vilyui R. tributary) Maak (1886) has recorded the first appearance of the RTLO on 13 May 1855, after that the RTLO was observed frequently. Izmailov and Borovitskaya (1973) write about RTLOs collected in May in Selenga R. delta and in August in Barguzinskiy Nature Reserve as migrant birds.

**Nesting habitats.** In Baikal Lake region the RTLOs breed on small lakes in the belt of the coastal lowlands (Skryabin, Filonov, 1962). It can settle on the secluded sites of the river delta and on extensive lakes (Turov, 1924). It settles readily in the taiga, forest-tundra and tundra landscapes (Vorob'yov, 1963).

**Breeding.** In tundras of West and East Siberia the egg-laying begins in the second half of June (Flint, 1982).

Clutch contains two eggs. Egg sizes from different regions of Siberia (mm): 60.3-79.0x41.7, mean 72.1x43.9 (Flint, 1982). Incubation period: 24-29 days (Ibidem). In Yakutia on Chukoch'ya River Vorob'yov (1963) observed a brood of two downy chicks on 15 July 1957. Shtegman (Stegmann, 1936) near Kotel'nikovskiy Cape observed a RTLO family with already flying young on 18 August.

**Diet.** In contrast to other loons the RTLOs prefer to forage in the shallow lakes and river shoals. The main food type— small fish (Flint, 1982). There are no data on feeding in Siberia.

**Yellow-billed Loon** (*Gavia adamsii* Gray, 1859).

**Status.** Rare vagrant species.

**Distribution.** Breeds on the Arctic shore of Eurasia and North America (Flint, 1982). It is rare throughout its range and due to its irregular distribution the total number is low. It is listed in the Russia's Red Book. There is an account of vagrant record of the YBLO in the North-Eastern Baikal Region (Fauna ptits....., 1991). One specimen was collected in June 1963 on Bolshaya River in Barguzin(skiy) Nature Reserve (Belyaev, 1979). There are no other data on this bird for Eastern Siberia.