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Red-throated Loon (RTLO) *Gavia stellata* Pontopp.

RTLO – one of the most rare migrating and wintering birds of Uzbekistan.

It, as well as any waterfowl, has a typical for the “duck” type prolonged body and neck, however tail is shorter, than in ducks. When swimming the Loon keeps its tail leveled with water in contrast to Mallard and Ruddy Duck. In Uzbekistan some can suggest records of birds in winter plumage, where typical for the species reddish-brown coloration of the neck is absent. Only dark back and light lower side of the body are visible from great distance. RTLOs have a habit to dive often and remain under water for a long time, surfacing sometimes far from where they submerged. In flight the RTLO’s silhouette is similar to ducks, but large legs protrude far behind due to a very short tail. Only representatives of subspecies *Gavia stellata stellata* Pontopp can reach the borders of Uzbekistan.

RTLO range extends to the northern edges of Eurasia (to Baltic countries, Ural, Baikal region and Amur Region in Siberia) and America (south to the USA).

In Uzbekistan the single records are limited to the findings in Amu Daria River mouth in the late autumn 1893 (Zarudnyi, 1896). Probably, based on this finding and the pair, observed on Amu Daria near Kerka 12.05, Zarudnyi (1918) considers the RTLO as a rare migrant species of Amu Daria R. valley and south of the Aral Sea.

In articles of ornithologists from Karakalpakia the RTLO is not mentioned, only Ametov (1981) has placed it on a list as a migrant species. He does not give the factual material, confirming this opinion; it was probably based on Zarudnyi’s data. There is a record of three unidentified loons in June 1947 on Kattakurgan(skoe) Reservoir (Bogdanov, 1956). Birds were left unidentified. Inclusion of the RTLO in the fauna of Uzbekistan is based only on 2 incomplete skins, delivered to Zarudnyi from Turtkul’ with remark “Amu Daria R. mouth”. Personal observation by Zarudnyi of a pair of loons on Amu Daria lower Kerka town 12.05.10 (Ivanov, 1940) belongs to the territory of Turkmenistan.

Natural habitats of the RTLO – vast and deep water bodies. During nesting period loons prefer lakes with soft banks, overgrown by the coastal vegetation. It winters mainly on the seashores. On migration it stops on lakes or great rivers. Exact situation, in which specimens were harvested in Uzbekistan is unknown.