

# Bird Numbers 2019

*Counting birds counts*

Book of Abstracts



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## MONITORING OF WINTERING DUCK POPULATIONS IN KRASNODAR PROVINCE, RUSSIA

Alexander Solokha, Yury Lokhman

AS: State Center of Game Animals and Habitats, Russia ([alex.solokha@gmail.com](mailto:alex.solokha@gmail.com)); YL: Wild Nature of the Caucasus NGO, Russia

Being important hunting resources with estimated annual bag of 1.2 million individuals in European part of country, ducks are among priorities of wildlife monitoring in Russia. International Waterbird Census (IWC) is the main scheme to monitor ducks and other waterbirds at their wintering grounds in southwestern parts of the country with support of federal and regional authorities. Krasnodar Province encompasses coasts of Sea of Azov and Black Sea, numerous lakes, water reservoirs and ponds which, in combination with arable lands, provide good conditions for wintering ducks, especially in mild seasons. Between 2003 and 2018 the IWC has been conducted annually in the region except for 2007-2009. The coverage varied, depending mostly on the available funds and freezing conditions of wetlands. Altogether, 39 wetland sites were counted at least once with high coverage (27 sites) in 2004.

The total numbers of waterbirds varied from 145,614 in 2003 to 1,112,213 in 2013. Ducks were always abundant and made up between 42% and 84% from total waterbird numbers counted in different winters. Altogether, 20 species of shel, dabbling and diving ducks were found. Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* (highest total was 677,104 in 2018), Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* (137,839 in 2014) and Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* (106,069 in 2013) were the most numerous species and showed strong or moderate increase over the reported period. Among individual sites, Varnava and Kryukovo water reservoirs, Taman Bay and Kiziltash limans supported the largest congregations of wintering ducks. Globally threatened species included Common Pochard (VU), Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* (VU) and White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala* (EN). Distribution, population trends and influences of natural and man-made factors are further discussed.