



GAME BIRDS IN THE VALLEYS OF OB RIVER LARGE TRIBUTARIES

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Surveys were carried out in the valleys of large Ob River feeders (Chulyum, Vasuygan, Tym, Ket') in the Tomsk Region in May-July, 1996-2009. Key areas were established on the rivers in such way that the distance (along the river channel) between the nearest areas was at least 200 km. The main sampling methods were morning en-route counts of birds and additional excursions on other hours of the day. The quota of a count was 5 km in each landscape tract, covered repeatedly every 2 weeks. All in all, we surveyed more than 130 tracts in all the valleys; the combined length of the route was about 3200 km. Bird migrations were observed from a fixed watching site on the Vasuygan River in April-May, 2004.

In all the valleys surveyed we registered 45 species of game birds: 20 species of Anseriformes, 5 Galliformes, 3 Gruiformes, 14 Charadriiformes and 3 Columbiformes. The greatest number of species – 42, was registered on the Chulyum River, the lowest – 35, on the Ket' River.

The abundance of all game bird species (especially, Anseriformes and Galliformes) has dropped since the 1960s-1970s by 1-2 orders of magnitude. At present, only *Tetrastes bonasia* and *Crex crex* remain abundant in Vasuygan River valley, and only in a few tracts. The rest of the species are either common or rare. On the Chulyum River, the leaders in abundance are *Anas querquedula*, *Tetrastes bonasia*, *Crex crex*. The only leader on the Ket' River is *Crex crex*. The highest population density on the Tym River is demonstrated by *Anas platyrhynchos*, *A. querquedula* and *A. crecca*.

