



GADWALL MIGRATIONS IN LENINGRAD REGION

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Intensive invasion of Gadwall into Leningrad Region began in the 1990s. It has become a common breeder in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland and adjacent areas.

Pre-breeding migration of Gadwall takes place in the 20s of April – first ten days of May. The greatest number of passage migrants (up to 70-90 birds a day) is observed over Kurgalsky Peninsula, which also provides rest to congestions of 170-230 staging birds. Most duck then proceed eastwards along the Gulf of Finland southern coast. Passage migration in the Neva Bay is much weaker, but staging groups of 20-30 birds can be seen in many localities. The spring migration in the Vyborg Bay and southern Ladoga area is also regular, but very scant – 5-20 birds per season.

Post-mating migrations of drakes and non-breeding females of Gadwall in the eastern Gulf of Finland commence in the last days of May, and are most noticeable over Kurgalsky Peninsula (up to 30-40 passage migrants a day); up to 250-350 staging birds gather in this period throughout the coast of the peninsula. In late May – first days of June, an overwhelming majority of the birds fly from their main breeding areas on the Baltic eastwards, continuing in the direction of the spring migration. The number of male Gadwall flocks in this period increases again along the whole of the Neva Bay coast. Westward bearings of the migration start prevailing in the second half of June – Gadwall congestions at Kurgalsky Peninsula in the 10s of June grow to 400-550 birds, whereupon the numbers gradually decrease until mid-July, when up to 100-150 steady fliers stay there, some of them not leaving until late July, which suggests substantial moult duration in the species.

In the first half of August, post-fledging dispersal of young birds and post-moult migrations of adult birds at Kurgalsky Peninsula, again, proceed from the main breeding areas eastwards (up to 30-40 birds/day) – up to 700-800 Gadwalls congest there by the late 10s of August. In



the 20s of August, reverse westward passage of Gadwall towards wintering areas becomes noticeable. The flight directions of the flocks travelling from the Neva Bay area and from the Vyborg Bay converge by the northern peak of Kurgalsky Peninsula. Most of the birds leave the area in the first half of September, heading for Estonia – on some days up to 300 passage migrants can be sighted.

Gadwall has become one of the most numerous dabbling ducks in large wetlands in southern Gulf of Finland area, and the process of its expansion is far from being complete. It is supported by the above-mentioned phenomenon of post-breeding, non-breeding adult and young birds actively migrating in summertime beyond their breeding areas. This fact is corroborated by ringing data (Kharitonov, 2002). In addition, these temporary out-migrations reduce competition for food in the main breeding areas.



CAPERCAILLIE AND BLACK GROUSE ABUNDANCE IN TAIGA REGIONS OF NORTHERN EUROPE

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Data from winter track counts carried out from Finland to Komi Republic in 2000-2009 were analysed.