



Using the resultant data we managed to identify the staging areas, species composition and abundance of migrating birds in different water areas along the shore, as well as in nearby wetland areas and fields. The area of highest importance for swans (daily abundance up to 3 000 birds), marine and diving ducks (incl. Goldeneye and Long-tailed Duck with daily abundances of 16 000 and 14 000 birds, respectively) is the SW part of the Petrokrepost' bight, for dabbling ducks (incl. the declining Eurasian Teal and Pintail) – Zelentsy Islands and productive frequently flooded ecosystems on the northern shore of Volkosarskiy Peninsula. The biggest stopover of waders was detected in the fields in the lower course of the Volkhov River, between Staraya Ladoga and Novaya Ladoga (daily abundance of the Curlew up to 2000 birds). The previously planned foundation of a number of protected areas in the southern part of Lake Ladoga is still an acute necessity. Each of the areas is unique in terms of the species composition and importance for conservation of waterfowl and shorebirds. The imminent build-up of Petrokrepost' bight shore and the dramatically intensified nuisance by motor boats at Volkosarskiy Peninsula call for urgent measures to conserve the Ladoga stopovers.



NATURAL AND POST-TRANSLOCATION MOVEMENTS OF BEAVERS

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Patterns in the migratory activity of autochthonous beavers *Castor fiber tuvinicus* from Upper Yenisei (Tyva Republic, Russia) were



studied using long-term live-catching and tagging data. Vectors and range of movements of beavers of different taxonomic groups (*Castor fiber ssp* and *C.canadensis*) after translocations in many regions of the Eurasian continent (eastern Tyva, northern Mongolia, European northeast, Western Siberia, Sikhote-Alin', and Lower Amur) were analysed. The distance, direction and timing of the migrations, as a rule, depend on the characteristics of waterbodies, food resources, and age of the animals.



LANDSCAPE USE OF SMALL PREDATORS AND ALTERNATIVE PREY IN FLUCTUATING VOLE DENSITIES

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The drastic population fluctuations of prey and predators are important characteristics of the North European fauna. For example voles which form one of the main prey groups in Fennoscandia follow 3- to 5-year population cycle. The synchronous population fluctuations of voles, predators and small game have been explained by the alternative prey hypothesis. Voles from genus *Microtus* are the main prey to many predators because of the high population densities they can reach. Forestry has increased open areas that are suitable for *Microtus* voles. The bank vole (*Myodes glareolus*), an alternative prey for many predators, uses large variety of habitats especially in the increase phase of the vole cycle but in the low phase it inhabits mainly older forests. The populations of *Microtus* voles are also fluctuating more strongly than those of bank voles. The stage of the population