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# Breeding biology of the Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus* in the northern part of its range in the Russian Far East

Nikolay P. Kolomiitsev\* & Nadezhda Y. Poddubnaya

Department of Biology, Cherepovets State University, 5 Lunacharsky Ave., 162600 Cherepovets, Vologda region, Russia  
npkolomitsev@mail.ru  
\*Corresponding author

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We present information on the phenology, behaviour, population size, nests and nesting habitat, dates and intervals of egg-laying, dimension and coloration of eggs, and duration of the incubation period of the Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus* in the northern part of its nesting range on the rivers of the Sikhote-Alin Mountains in the southern part of the Russian Far East. Long-billed Plovers breed along rivers on shingle islands and spits which are large enough to fulfil their needs and which are only occasionally flooded. Such sites are composed mainly of shingle with stones ranging from 30 to 60 mm, with interstices filled to a varying degree with finer pebbles and always with sand just below the top layer of gravel. However, Long-billed Plovers only occupy such areas if they are at the initial stages of succession with few herbaceous plants and small willows. The hydrological regime of rivers seems to be a main factor determining the population dynamics of the species. Natural predators of nests and chicks include Carrion Crows *Corvus corone*, Jungle Crows *C. macrorhynchus*, Common Magpies *Pica pica* and Raccoon Dogs *Nyctereutes procyonoides*. In the places where Long-billed Plovers are disturbed during the courtship displays, they do not reproduce. The outcome of this work can provide insights to effective strategies for conservation of the species.

## INTRODUCTION

The Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus* is widely distributed in S and E Asia (Brazil 2009, Clements 2007, Meyer de Schauensee 1984, Moores 2007, Rasmussen & Anderton 2005, Stegmann 1930, Wiersma 1996), but throughout its range it only occurs at low density. It has been widely recorded across its range at different seasons of the year and in different areas (De Silva & Perera 1993, Eaton & Rheindt 2009, Greeshma 2011, Islam 2006, Liu *et al.* 2008, Murose 1998, Rasmussen & Anderton 2005, Robson 2000, Zhao *et al.* 2012), and there are many breeding records in various parts of the range from the Bureya River in Russia (Antonov 2012) to the south of Honshu island in Japan (Hirai 1999), western Arunachal Pradesh in the Indian Himalayas (Eaton & Rheindt 2009) and SE China (Wilkinson *et al.* 2008), but precise details of its breeding biology are little known (Hirai 1999, Kolomiitsev 1988, Rai 1995, Uchida 2007). Our study was conducted in typical Long-billed Plover habitats on the rivers of the Sikhote-Alin Mountains in the southern part of the Russian Far East (Fig. 1). Our aim was to provide more detailed knowledge on the breeding biology and breeding habitat of this poorly known species.

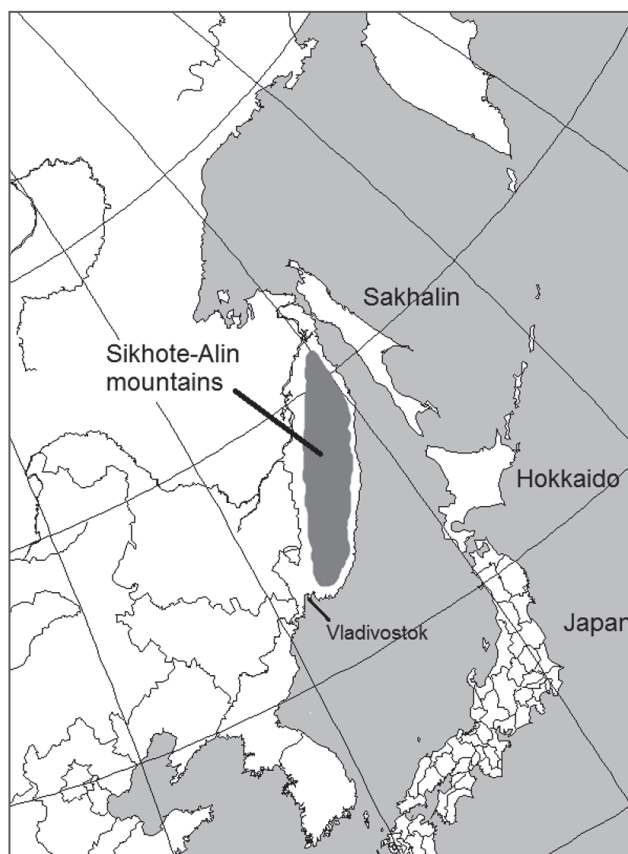


Fig. 1. Location map showing the Sikhote-Alin mountain range in the Russian Far East.