

Bustard Condition (*OTIS TARDA TARDA L.*) in the Northern Tajikistan

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Abstract: *The Bustard has a limited distribution in Northern Tajikistan and concerns in category of threatened species of birds. Suitable habitats of this species are located in a semidesert zone of a foothill part of the Kuramin range within Samgar and Asht files.*

Keywords: fauna, bustard, population, Tajikistan, migration, relict.

Among the land birds of the fauna of Tajikistan, the bustard has a massive body, a relatively long and thick neck, and powerful legs that distinguish it from other individuals. Many years ago, this bird in a significant number in Northern Tajikistan lived in biotopes of semi-desert and steppe landscapes, using them not only as transient ones when flying in numbers of their local, but also partially for wintering. In addition to descriptions of bustard for the first time by Karl Linney (1), data on the distribution of bustard in northern Tajikistan is extremely insufficient. In addition, they admit conflicting conclusions about the possibility of bustard nesting in suitable biotopes (2), that it only flies to our region for wintering (3). Since the end of the last century, under local conditions, the named bird has become an endangered species and is listed in the Red Book of the Republic, meeting only semi-deserts where the Somgor-Asht highway (4,5) passes, along the route we discovered at the watering hole on April 2, 1998. as a part of a bustard - *Otis tardatarda*. The corresponding area is mainly covered with ephemeral vegetation, with sparse bushes of perennial plants, including saxaul and tamarisk. During the re-examination on May 16, 2002, we found 6 individuals of bustards. Males differed from females in large sizes and coloration. Males differed from females in large sizes and coloration. The birds were very careful. Since 2003, these vast lands began to be developed for sowing crops. The geological wells located on them, where the birds flew to the watering hole, began to collapse and the birds left this biotope. In the summer of 2006, in the foothills of the Kuramin ridge, we discovered a bustard clutch consisting of three eggs. In recent years, bustards have become more common in hard-to-reach areas. In recent years, bustards have become more common in hard-to-reach areas. In August of the following year, we witnessed the location of two bustards in the sun. After digging a hole, they lay down with their wings spread and with extreme caution pushed the observer away. In open areas, they are not always and not immediately able to see. High growth and good vision allows them to notice danger to them at great distances, and they fly away or run away very quickly. In our case, upon hearing the sound and the hum of the motorcycle engine, the birds lurked, their heads lowered to the ground and practically merged with the terrain. Approaching them prompted them to take off and quickly retire.

Bustards fly at a speed of up to 50 km / h, making deep and slow flaps with wide wings, but for takeoff they need to take a run of 15-20 meters (5).

Our studies on the bustard abundance continued in the fall and spring months. So, on October 29 and December 8, 2007, we respectively found 5 of their bustards, but when they saw us from a long distance, they quickly retired from their places of stay. Perhaps it was a brood of bustard with its parents. Two bustards in it were relatively small in size, differing from others in their pale color. Winter in the first months of 2008 was harsh - the air temperature reached a level of -30 ° C. Quite naturally, the Syr Darya river was icebound, as a result of which many birds that flew in for the winter died both from the cold and from the nest, to our surprise, in the last decade of January and the first decade of February 2008, they were found very depleted and exhausted bustards.

By March 25, on the right bank of the river, among the tall tamarisk bushes, we had one witnessed a couple in bright mating plumage, and the male had elongated feathers on his sides of his head, the so-called "mustaches".

During the study on June 26, 2008, when the level of daytime air temperature approached 45°C, we found adult bustards with two chicks in the Somgar-Asht massif. Noticing our search, one of them spread her wings, tried to attack us, and then made a timid movement flew away.

Not far from this scene, we saw two bustard chicks that quickly scattered in different directions. This case indicates that the bustard not only spent a harsh winter, but also reproduced the chicks in northern Tajikistan. Therefore, nesting bustards on the territory of the latter as a phenomenon should prompt us to be very careful about this unique species of birds throughout its range in Central Asia. This is primarily true for business entities that master the traditional nesting bustards, poachers who do not know the laws of ecology, nature lovers, hunters. Otherwise, these beautiful birds, the bustards, will completely disappear from northern Tajikistan in the coming years.

References

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