

Eastern Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa melanuroides* in the Selenga Delta, Lake Baikal, Siberia

NIKO GROEN^{1,2*}, RON MES¹, IGOR FEFELOV³ & IGOR TUPITSYN^{3,4}

¹Foundation Working Group for International Water bird and Wetland Research (WIWO),
p/o SOVON, Rijksstraatweg 178, 6573 DG, Beek-Ubbergen, the Netherlands

^{2*}Animal Ecology Group, Centre for Ecological and Evolutionary Studies, University of Groningen,
PO Box 14, 9750 AA Haren, the Netherlands (address for correspondence)

³Research Institute of Biology at Irkutsk State University, PO Box 24, Irkutsk 664003, Russia

⁴Irkutsk State Pedagogical University, Nizhnaya Naberezhnaya 6, Irkutsk 664011, Russia

Groen, N., Mes, R., Fefelov, I. & Tupitsyn, I. 2006. Eastern Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa melanuroides* in the Selenga Delta, Lake Baikal, Siberia. *Wader Study Group Bull.* 110: 48–53.

Keywords: shorebird, Black-tailed Godwit, *Limosa limosa melanuroides*, breeding biology, Selenga delta, Lake Baikal

The lower Selenga and its delta are among the main breeding sites of Eastern Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa melanuroides*, but this area is quite isolated from other populations. During our expedition in May–June 2002, we found 21 Black-tailed Godwit nests and trapped 17 adults and 4 freshly hatched chicks. The median first egg date of the 21 nests was 26 May, but some may have been replacement clutches. Mean egg volume per clutch decreased over the course of the season. On the basis of numbers, the preferred breeding habitat was the wet grass and sedge areas of the central delta (15 nests) rather than the drier inner delta (six nests). However, this seems inconsistent with observations that more godwits breed when the water table is low. It is in such conditions that the population peaks at around 100 pairs. Though this is not large compared with recent estimates for *melanuroides* on the Australian wintering grounds of 160,000 the Selenga population is nevertheless of regional importance because of its isolation.