



2018 APPLICATION FORM

Small Grants Fund for Working Groups & Task Forces

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title: _____
Ding _____ Changqing _____
Family name **Given Name/s**

Institution: _____
EAAFP Baer's Pochard

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Title: The waterfowl survey with a special reference to Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*) in Ganukan Refuge, Amur Region, Russian Far East, July-August 2018

Part A. Project Proposal

Ganukan Refuge (Game Reserve, Zakaznik) is located in the south of Amur Region (Oblast') of Russia and in the central Amur-Heilong basin (Figure 1). It is part of Ramsar and EAAFP site # EAAF021. The territory includes a large number of lakes of different size and other kinds of wetlands, as well as the entire basin of a small swampy river called Ganukan. Similar habitats have been previously occupied by Baer's Pochard (BP) in the west of Amur Region (e.g. Muraviovka Refuge) and along the Ussuri River basin in Primorie (far east Russia). Most of the former confirmed habitats of BP in the south-west of Amur Region now are destroyed by agriculture and other human activities. Only 5 solitary BP have been seen since 2009 in Muraviovka (Stein 2011; Heim *et al.*, pers. comm.) and even fewer records are known for the whole western region of the species range in Russia in the last decade (Goroshko, pers. comm.). Also, only a handful of BP records are known for Primorie during the last 10 years (Soloviova *et al.*, 2013; Surmach *et al.*, pers. comm.) and none of those in Khabarovsk vicinity (Pronkevich, pers. comm.). At the same time migrating individuals and even small flocks are still found in Khanka Lake and across Heilongjiang Province in China (Hearn 2015). Thus, a few of breeding locations in the middle part of Amur River basin probably exist but are undiscovered. A record of two fledged individuals of an unidentified *Aythya* species, but most likely *A. baeri* in the lower Uril River (eastern border of Ganukan Refuge) in August 2014 also justifies further attention here.

Despite its likely importance, the Ganukan Refuge has never been properly surveyed for its breeding waterfowl community due to the largely inaccessible swampy territory and a lack of funding. Most of the Ganukan River basin is away from road accessibility. The farm roads occur only in the south of the Refuge where crop fields are cultivated. Ganukan River itself is also difficult for boat use because it is small and shallow. For local transportation there we have to use specially constructed vehicles like those depicted in Figures 2-3.

We plan to visit most of the larger lakes during the second half of July and beginning of August when ducklings should be in the advanced stages of growth and more detectable than immediately after hatching, and adults should still be on their (potential) breeding areas. The limited information on the timing of breeding of BP which is available for Amur and contiguous regions states that the incubation period is in June and brood rearing in July to nearly the end of August.

The field crew includes 3 to 4 people including a leading researcher with one or two helpers and vehicle driver. We aim to survey each large lake in the Ganukan Refuge as well as the main channels of the Ganukan River for their waterfowl species composition and brood counts. All data collection will follow standardized methods with species and brood age identification, and sexing of adults when possible. The location of each observation will be recorded using a GPS and collated in a GIS-layer (theme) along with

corresponding attribute tables. Photography for further documentation will also be carried out when possible.

As the area of planned survey is part of the EAAFP flyway site network, we hope to complete monitoring of the whole EAAFP site #021 which includes the Ganukan Refuge and Khingan Federal Reserve. The latter area is much better studied and regularly monitored for breeding waterbirds. Together with the results of this survey the information collected in the Reserve by the Federal bird monitoring program during the season 2018 will fulfill the task on waterbirds data updating for EAAFP network.

The total budget of US\$1600 provides for a 10 day survey. This requires rent of a suitable vehicle (\$80 per day), fuel for it (\$66 per 100 l, 600 l in total) and an allowance for 4 surveyors (\$10 per day per person).

It is possible to undertake a shorter survey in 2018 for US\$800. The duration would be 5 days and require 300 l of fuel. If we took this approach we could then survey the rest of the study area in Ganukan in 2019, using experience of potential impediments (especially if some evidence of BP presence is found during summer 2018).

A full report detailing the areas surveyed and the waterbird and habitat data collected will be produced by the end of October 2018.

Aleksey Antonov & Marina Babykina

References

Soloviova, D., A. Antonov, O. Goroshko, V. Pronkevich & S. Surnach. 2013. Emergency measures to save Baer's Pochard: location of breeding sites in Russia. Unpublished report. Institute of Biological Problems of the North, Magadan: 18.

Stein, A.C. 2011. Ornithological observations within Muraviovka Zakaznik during 2009 and 2010. *Amurskii Zoologicheskii Zhurnal* 3: 78-85.

Hearn, R.D. 2015. International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*), 2015-2019. CMS Technical Series No. 37. EAAFP

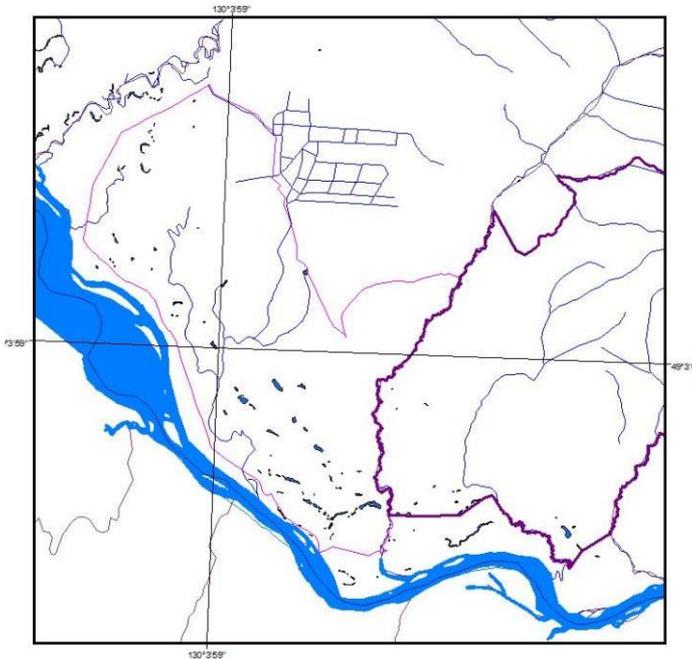


Figure 1. Sketch of Ganukan Refuge (borders of Khingansky Reserve are thicker, Amur River is depicted at the bottom)



Figures 2-3. Transport for field work.



Figure 4. Typical wetland of Ganukan.

PROJECT BUDGET (please outline your entire project, not just the component for which funds are being sought)

Budget

All values are in United States dollars (USD)

Item	Description	Cost/Unit	Cost
Vehicle	10 days hire	\$80.00 per day	800.00
Fuel	600 litres	\$66.00 per 100l	396.00
Subsistence	4 fieldworkers for 10 days	\$10.00 per day er person	400.00
TOTAL			1596.00

PAYMENT DETAILS

To ensure prompt payment of successful applications please complete the following details and submit with your application.

PREFERRED PAYMENT METHOD

Electronic funds transfer (EFT)