

## RECORDS OF THE MANDARIN DUCK (*AIX GALERICULATA*) IN THE EUROPEAN NORTH OF RUSSIA

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**Abstract.** This article presents records of the Mandarin Duck in the European North of Russia, which are about 4500 km from natural area and 2000 km from introduced European populations. It summarises the published Russian papers on records of the Mandarin duck in the European part of Russia.

**Key words:** Arkhangelsk region, fauna, vagrant.

**Находки мандаринки (*Aix galericulata*) на европейском севере России. - В.М. Спицин, Г.С. Потапов. - Беркут. 25 (2). 2016. - В статье представлен обзор залетов мандаринки на европейском севере России, что составляет около 4500 км от естественного ареала и 2000 км от интродуцированных европейских популяций. Обобщены опубликованные работы о находках вида в регионе.**

**Ключевые слова:** Архангельская область, фауна, залет.

### Introduction

The natural breeding habitat of the Mandarin Duck (*Aix galericulata*) in Russia is limited to Primorsky and Khabarovsk Krai, on Sakhalin Island, which is a large Russian-owned island in the North Pacific Ocean, between 45° 50' N and 54° 24' N. It breeds also in Japan, China and North Korea and hibernates in Japan, China and likely in South Korea (Poyarkov, 2011). In the 18th century, this species was introduced into England and currently the European populations live in the British Isles, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Poland (Holden, Cleeves, 2006; Cierplikowski et al., 2013; Van Kleunen, Lemaire, 2014). Outside of Europe, it has been introduced into the United States (California) (Van Kleunen, Lemaire 2014).

### Material and methods

We watched the birds on 6 October 2016. One male of the Mandarin Duck was recorded, along with a group of the Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*). They floated on a small artificial pond (64° 33' 54" N, 40° 33' 22" E) in the town of Arkhangelsk (Primorsky district, Arkhangelsk region, Russia). The birds were recorded in the field journal and photographed with a camera (Canon 650D, Tamron AF 70–300 mm). The Mandarin Duck (Photo) was determined using the keys proposed by Holden, Cleeves (2006) and Poyarkov (2011).

### Results and discussion

This is probably one of the farthest recorded sightings of Mandarin Duck from natural habitat. The distance from breeding range is about 4500 km; from the introduced populations in Europe it is about 2000 km. It is noteworthy that the Mandarin Ducks is often bred in zoos and in cages in suburban areas, where they are treated as ornamental birds. However, in Arkhangelsk region they are not kept in private households. This fact, and the lack of rings and discolouration of the plumage that is typical for these birds when contained in cages, allows us to exclude the hypothesis that this particular bird of our sighting escaped from either private farms or zoos.

The first record of Mandarin Duck (two males) in Arkhangelsk region was noted by Andreev and Kozlov (2016) on the river Vaymuga in Kholmogory district (63° 28' 30" N, 41° 44' 00" E), which is about 130 km south from Arkhangelsk, in April 2016. At the same time with us in October 2016, the Mandarin Duck in Arkhangelsk was recorded by Andreev (2016). The previous records in the European North of Russia relate to Murmansk and Petrozavodsk (Lapshin, 2014) (Fig.).

In general, this is not the only case of invasion of southern birds in Arkhangelsk region. For example, in the late 19th century and early 20th century, the Eurasian Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*), the Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*), the Chukar Partridge (*Alectoris chukar*) were recorded near Arkhangelsk (Asoskova, Konstantinov, 2005). A new wave of migrants appeared in 2015. The Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) and the Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) (Andreev, Spitsyn, 2015) were recorded. The Great Crested Grebe successfully built a nest and reared their chicks (Andreev, 2015). Also, it is noteworthy that there was an invasion of the Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*) into the northern border of Arkhangelsk region (Andreev, Spitsyn, 2015). However, unlike the previously mentioned species, the Mandarin Duck is listed in the Red Book of the Russian Federation (Shibaev,



The male of Mandarin Duck on a pond in Arkhangelsk. 6.10.2016.

Photo by V.M. Spitsyn.

Самец мандаринки на одном из прудов в г. Архангельске.



Location of records of the Mandarin Duck in the European North of Russia. Black dots are the literature data, red dot is the present study. Места встреч мандаринки на европейском севере России. Черные точки – литературные сведения, красная точка – наши данные.

2001) as a rare species (category 3). This fact confirms the uniqueness of the invasion of this species.

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