

Breeding habitat and recent population changes in a depleted population of Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* in Western Norway

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The Red-throated diver (RTD) has an extensive breeding range in Norway, occurring as a breeding species both in southern and northern Norway. However, breeding densities varies much on a regional level with the minor part of the national population in Southern Norway.

Since 2000 the RTD population in Western Norway has been in focus to improve our knowledge about the status of breeding RTDs. New information has been gained from own surveys in selected breeding areas, in addition to collecting ad hoc information from several sources. Key issues have been to document the trend of breeding RTD in the region, quantify their breeding habitats and if possible gain insights into threats towards RTD during their breeding period. As we consider the RTD being a regional depleted breeding species, we have also worked on issues dealing with historical distribution and breeding habitats.

Marked short term variation in size of the regional population will be discussed in relation to possible impact factors.

Our work will continue as long term studies are necessary regarding RTD and other long-lived bird species. Our RTD-project has economically granted by regional conservation bodies for several years post 2000.