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# Birds in estuaries can act as indicators of climate change: a study at a key wintering site for waterbirds in Europe

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Climate change can shift the winter range of many species and birds can act as indicators of this process. Estuaries of large rivers are places where different waterbirds winter with each species reflecting their own behavior and sensitivity to weather changes. Knowing these behaviors and tracking long-term changes in the number of birds, we can confirm the direction of climate change. One estuary of key importance for wintering waterfowl is the Odra River Estuary situated in the south-western part of the Baltic Sea. The most numerous birds here belong to two groups: benthic feeders and fish feeders. We show that numbers of all benthivorous waterbirds were negatively correlated with the presence of ice, but for piscivorous there was no relationship. We anticipate that with continued global warming the importance of this area for benthic feeders will increase, but will decrease for fish feeders. Among the seven species of benthivorous birds we studied, one showed an increase in numbers (Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*), two were stable (Tufted Duck *A. fuligula* and Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*) and two decreased (Common Pochard *A. ferina* and Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*); among the piscivorous group two species (Smew *Mergellus albellus* and Goosander *Mergus merganser*) showed a decline. The decline of the Common Pochard may reflect that species global decline. Climate change may be responsible for some of the local changes in the study area, namely the increase in the number of Greater Scaup and reduction in the numbers of Common Goldeneye, Smew and Goosander.

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21 **Abstract**

22           Climate change can shift the winter range of many species and birds can act as indicators  
23 of this process. Estuaries of large rivers are places where different waterbirds winter with each  
24 species reflecting their own behavior and sensitivity to weather changes. Knowing these  
25 behaviors and tracking long-term changes in the number of birds, we can confirm the direction of  
26 climate change. One estuary of key importance for wintering waterfowl is the Odra River  
27 Estuary situated in the south-western part of the Baltic Sea. The most numerous birds here  
28 belong to two groups: benthic feeders and fish feeders. We show that numbers of all  
29 benthivorous waterbirds were negatively correlated with the presence of ice, but for piscivorous  
30 there was no relationship. We anticipate that with continued global warming the importance of  
31 this area for benthic feeders will increase, but will decrease for fish feeders. Among the seven  
32 species of benthivorous birds we studied, one showed an increase in numbers (Greater Scaup  
33 *Aythya marila*), two were stable (Tufted Duck *A. fuligula* and Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*) and  
34 two decreased (Common Pochard *A. ferina* and Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*);  
35 among the piscivorous group two species (Smew *Mergellus albellus* and Goosander *Mergus*  
36 *mergamser*) showed a decline. The decline of the Common Pochard may reflect that species  
37 global decline. Climate change may be responsible for some of the local changes in the study  
38 area, namely the increase in the number of Greater Scaup and reduction in the numbers of  
39 Common Goldeneye, Smew and Goosander.

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41 Key words: winter range shift; ice coverage sensitivity; Greater Scaup; Tufted Duck; Common  
42 Pochard; Eurasian Coot; Smew; important bird areas; behavior; Baltic Sea

43

#### 44 **Introduction**

45 Climate change shifts the winter range of many bird species (Musil et al. 2011; Meller  
46 2016). Knowing the behavior of species we can track changes in population numbers which may  
47 reflect changes in temperatures. The migration distance of southern and western European  
48 species to wintering areas in central Europe are shorter during mild winters (Pavon-Jordan et al.  
49 2015). It is advantageous for populations to have short migration distances since this behavior  
50 allows early arrival to breeding grounds, acquisition of higher quality territories, and probably  
51 greater survival (Coppack and Both 2002; Jankowiak et al. 2015a; 2015b). Bird may change  
52 their wintering sites to warmer regions during colder periods because they can sense the local  
53 manifestation of large-scale atmospheric features (Newton 2008). The food resources of  
54 wintering sites are also a factor in decisions about staying at potential sites ( Cresswell 2014;  
55 Aharon-Rotman et al. 2016). However the winter site fidelity of waterfowl is known to be very  
56 high (Newton 2008), but site fidelity can decrease because of changes in weather, climate,  
57 habitat and competition (Cresswell 2014). The changing of winter sites should be seen as trade  
58 off between the costs of finding new sites and the benefits available at the new site (Aharon-  
59 Rotman et al. 2016). Here we tested changes in wintering sites by waterbirds as a result of  
60 climate changes. The shallow water of nearshore lagoons create ideal conditions for three  
61 functional ecological groups of waterbirds: piscivores, herbivores and benthivores. In our study,  
62 benthivores included Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila* – hereafter Scaup), Tufted Duck (*A. fuligula*

63 – hereafter Tufted Duck), Common Pochard (*A. ferina* – hereafter Pochard), Common  
64 Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula* – hereafter Goldeneye) and Eurasian Coot (*Fulica atra* –  
65 hereafter Coot); and piscivores included Smew *Mergellus albellus* and Goosander *Mergus*  
66 *merganser* (Kaliciuk et al. 2003; Czeraszkiwicz et al. 2004; Marchowski and Ławicki 2011;  
67 Guentzel et al. 2012; Marchowski and Ławicki 2012; Marchowski et al. 2013). The study site is  
68 known to hold on regular basis significant number of a biogeographic population of the above  
69 listed species (Wilk et al. 2010) (see Table 3). Biogeographic population in this work means the  
70 part of global population with specific flyway region eg. in the case of Scaup the population  
71 breeding in western Siberia and northern Europe and wintering in western Europe (according to  
72 Wetland International 2016). The Odra River Estuary accommodates large numbers of  
73 waterbirds because of food resources (Marchowski et al. 2015; Marchowski et al. 2016). The  
74 study area is recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA) of international importance and  
75 designated also as Natura 2000 areas of the European ecological network. Changes in the  
76 structure of species proportions and their numbers at the Odra River Estuary over the years may  
77 show the impacts of climate change.

78         In this paper we are asking questions about whether some species, due to climate  
79 warming, will change their presence at the Odra River Estuary. We assumed that benthic feeding  
80 birds will be more sensitive to ice cover and that fish feeding birds will not be affected by ice  
81 cover. If our assumptions are true, increased temperatures and the corresponding shorter period  
82 of ice cover provide better conditions for benthic feeders and their numbers may increase. Most  
83 of the richest feeding grounds rich in mussels are located in shallow water (Marchowski et al.  
84 2015), so any ice cover significantly reduces the availability of food. Fish, on the other hand,  
85 remain available even when ice cover is great since unfrozen areas may still be rich in fish.

## 86 Study area

87 The study area lies in the south-western part of the Baltic Sea and forms the Polish part of  
88 the Odra River Estuary system, which includes the Great Lagoon (Polish part of the Szczecin  
89 Lagoon), Świna Backward Delta, Kamień Lagoon, Dziwna Strait and Lake Dąbie with a total  
90 area of 522.58 km<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 1). Average and maximum depths of the estuary are 3.8 and 8.5 m,  
91 respectively; the dredged shipping lane cutting across the estuary from the Baltic Sea to the port  
92 of Szczecin is 10.5 m deep (Radziejewska and Schernewski 2008). Waters of the Szczecin  
93 Lagoon, Kamień Lagoon and Lake Dąbie are brackish. The salinity in the central part of the  
94 estuary varies from 0.3 psu to 4.5 psu (mean = 1.4 psu) and declines with increasing distance  
95 from the sea (Radziejewska and Schernewski 2008). Periodic inflows of water from the  
96 Pomeranian Bay (salinity ~7 psu) take place through the Świna Strait and, to a lesser extent,  
97 through the Dziwna and Peene Straits (the latter located in the German part of the Odra River  
98 Estuary). Average winter temperature is 0.3° C (Weatherbase 2016). The Odra River Estuary is  
99 subject to strong anthropogenic pressures manifested by high levels of eutrophication with all its  
100 adverse effects (Radziejewska and Schernewski 2008). Communities of benthic organisms are  
101 typical of freshwater bodies and the fauna includes large populations zebra mussels *Dreissena*  
102 *polymorpha* which were introduced in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. By the 1960s, the biomass of zebra  
103 mussels in the Szczecin (Great) Lagoon was estimated at 110,000 metric tons (Wiktor 1969,  
104 Wolnomiejski and Woźniczka 2008) and has seemed to be quite stable; biomass estimate from  
105 the early 2000s was 94,280 metric tons (Marchowski et al. 2015). The fish fauna consists mainly  
106 freshwater fish such as roach *Rutilus rutilus*, bream *Abramis brama*, pike *Esox lucius*, perch  
107 *Perca fluviatilis*, ruff *Gymnocephalus cernua*; there are also anadromous fish like smelt *Osmerus*

108 *eperlanus*, as well as endeavoring to inflows of sea fish like herring *Clupea harengus*  
109 (Wolnomiejski and Witek 2013).

## 110 **Methods**

### 111 ***Birds census***

112 Censuses were conducted using standard methods for non-breeding season waterbird  
113 counts (Komdeur et al. 1992; Wetland International 2010). Birds were counted during 17 seasons  
114 (1991/1992 to 1993/1994 and 2001/2002 to 2015/2016) during migration and wintering periods  
115 between November and April. Three censuses were made per season during November, January  
116 and March or April; during 1991/1992 to 1993/1994 and for 2001/2002 only a mid-winter count  
117 in January was made. All together we analyzed 43 count results. Most counts were conducted on  
118 foot. Each observer was equipped with 10x binoculars and tripod-mounted telescopes. Observers  
119 walked along the same routes stopping every few hundred meters or conducted observations  
120 from vantage points reachable by car. Thirteen aerial counts were made at average speed of  
121 about 100 km/h and about 80 m above the water. Bird locations were plotted using an onboard  
122 GPS device. Detailed methodology and results of these counts are given elsewhere (Meissner  
123 and Kozakiewicz 1992; Meissner et al 1994; Kaliciuk et al. 2003; Czeraszkiwicz et al. 2004;  
124 Marchowski and Ławicki 2011; Guentzel et al. 2012; Marchowski and Ławicki 2012;  
125 Marchowski et al. 2013). Counts of large numbers of unidentified *Aythya* species -in November  
126 2009 (26,000 individuals), November 2010 (13,000 individuals), January 2012 (6000  
127 individuals), March 2012 (3300 individuals), and November 2015 (13,500 individuals) - were  
128 allocated to either Greater Scaup or Tufted Duck based on the mean ratio of these two species  
129 (1.0 Scaup : 0.8 Tufted Duck) obtained from other counts. The research consisted of



130 observations of birds from a distance, such studies do not cause disturbance of birds. In Poland,  
131 such studies do not need special permission or approval.

### 132 *Ice cover data*

133 We used data on ice cover as published by the Polish Institute of Meteorology and Water  
134 Management. These data were collected using standard methods specified for the entire basin of  
135 the Baltic Sea partitioned into sectors. Ice conditions of each sector were contained in the  
136 "Monthly Ice Listing" daily protocol encoded as a four-digit key  $A_B S_B T_B K_B$  where  $A_B$  is the  
137 degree of ice cover and placement of ice,  $S_B$  is the stage of development of ice,  $T_B$  is topography  
138 and type of ice and  $K_B$  is the conditions for navigation in ice. In addition to the information  
139 contained in the key, we recorded ice extent (km), ice thickness (cm), thickness of snow on the  
140 ice (cm), direction and speed of ice, range of visibility of water body surface (km). The  
141 observation point at Miroszewo on the shore of the Szczecin Lagoon (53.734 N, 14.331 E) is one  
142 of the stations included in the ice information system of the Baltic Sea region. The point was  
143 located at the top of a cliff, above the water surface and on a clear day about 75% of the surface  
144 of the Szczecin Lagoon, the largest water body in the Odra River Estuary, can be seen.  
145 Observations were conducted daily from 1 November to 30 April at 12:00 UTC.

### 146 *Statistical analysis*

147 For statistical calculations, we used ice cover data for the date prior to the bird count. We  
148 compared the number of days with 100% ice cover in the period from 0 to 15 days prior to bird  
149 counts. Ice cover of 100% refers specifically to the observation point but our field observations  
150 show that most of our study area is also nearly 100% frozen. In practice, however, 100% of ice  
151 cover never occurs (Girjatowicz 1991; 2005; see also Discussion section for explanation) and

152 birds are still be present in these conditions. Our count data was compared to a species'  
153 biogeographical population. Using population estimates and trends (Wetland International 2016  
154 after: Larsen 1992; Delany et al. 1999 and BirdLife International 2004; see Table 1) we  
155 calculated the percentage of the total population represented by our counts. The population size  
156 for each of winter season was corrected by changes from year to year, e.g., the in case of Scaup,  
157 total population in 1991 was 310,000 and assuming a 2.3% annual decline the 1992 population  
158 was 303,000 and then 296,000 in 1993 and so on. So our dependent variable reflects the change  
159 to whole regional population.

160 To check the relationship between percentage of population of given species and ice cover we  
161 performed a generalized mixed model. The target variable was treated with normal distribution  
162 response distribution and identity link function. Mixed models allowed us to have repetition  
163 across survey years (random intercept). Both independent variables were continuous. Before  
164 starting the analysis we tested variation inflation factor between continuous variation, and  
165 analysis showed no collinearity between them. We used the statistical software R (R Core Team  
166 2014) with installed package lme4 (Bates et al. 2014) for analyses.  $P < 0.05$  was considered as  
167 statistical significant.

## 168 **Results**

169 Results confirmed our suspicions that the benthic feeding species were more sensitive to  
170 lower temperatures and leave sooner when colder weather creases ice cover, while fish feeding  
171 species do not show changes in their numbers regardless of ice cover (Tables 2).

172 Additionally results show changes in the population numbers over the last 25 years. In the  
173 case of Scaup we found an increase in their numbers at the Odra River Estuary despite a general

174 decline for the species wintering in northern and western Europe. Tufted Ducks showed no  
175 changes at the Odra River Estuary while numbers wintering in north-western Europe increase  
176 slightly. Pochards showed declines in their relative number in our study area as well as for  
177 northern Europe in general. For Goldeneye we noted a decline in the Odra River Estuary, but for  
178 Europe populations increased. The relative number Coots did not change in the Odra River  
179 Estuary while European numbers decreased slightly. Smew showed a decrease in the Odra River  
180 Estuary while European numbers increased. Goosander numbers decreased in the Odra River  
181 Estuary and showed a slight decrease for population wintering in north-western and central  
182 Europe (see Table 1, Table 2 and Wetland International 2016). Changes in the importance of the  
183 Odra River Estuary for wintering populations of diving waterbirds in the last 25 years occurred  
184 for five of the seven species we studied. Tufted Duck and Coot did not have significant changes.  
185 For Scaup we noted the growing importance of the area and for Pochard, Goldeneye, Smew and  
186 Goosander a decrease (Table 3).

## 187 **Discussion**

188       As we predicted benthic feeding birds (Scaup, Tufted Duck, Pochard, Goldeneye and  
189 Coot) were more sensitive to the presence of ice cover. Benthivorous birds feed in the Odra  
190 River Estuary mainly on mussels from the genus *Dreissena* (Marchowski et al. 2015, 2016),  
191 these food resources are primarily found in water 1-2 m deep (Wiktor 1969; Wolnomiejski and  
192 Woźniczka 2008; Wolnomiejski and Witek 2013). Shallow water freezes faster displacing birds  
193 to deeper unfrozen areas. In addition, the food richness of unfrozen areas declines due to greater  
194 use. For fish feeding birds we have assumed that increasing ice cover will not affect their  
195 numbers and this assumption is true. Ice cover is never 100% here; the shipping lane between  
196 Świnoujście and Szczecin is kept free of ice (Girjatowicz 1991; 2005) and there are also always

197 other areas free of ice, especially at the mouths of small rivers flowing into the estuary. These  
198 areas free of ice may still abound in fish and provide food for fish feeders. When temperatures  
199 drop there is often an influx of new individuals arriving from the east and north. Comparison of  
200 estimates of a species' total European numbers (Wetland International 2016) with numbers for  
201 the Odra River Estuary is interesting since local trends and European trends do not always agree.  
202 Below we will discuss this for each species.

### 203 *Scaup*

204 Scaup wintering populations in northern and western Europe have been declining at an  
205 annual rate of -2.3%/year (Wetland International 2016). About 41% of the Scaup populations  
206 winters in Baltic Sea region (Skov et al. 2011) which has declined by 60% from 1991 to 2010  
207 (Aunis 2013). Contrary to this we found Scaup numbers to have increased in the Odra River  
208 Estuary as has been mentioned by Skov et al. (2011) who describe a threefold increase in  
209 numbers in the Szczecin Lagoon and the eastern coastal areas of Germany and declines further  
210 west along the German coast, where areas like Wismar Bay and Travelförde support much lower  
211 numbers than 15 years ago. A similar trend exists in Sweden, where Nilsson and Haas (2016)  
212 show a significant increase in the number of wintering Scaup between 1971 and 2015. In the  
213 other hand at the most important wintering sites further west in the Netherlands, Hornman et al.  
214 (2012) showed decrease since 1980/1981. All of these studies confirm that Scaup are shifting  
215 their wintering range further north and east closer to their breeding areas and this is the reason  
216 for increased numbers of Scaup in the Odra River Estuary despite the decline in numbers of the  
217 species' European population.

218

### 219 *Tufted Duck*

220 Tufted Duck populations wintering in north-western Europe have been increasing at  
221 +0.3%/year (Wetland International 2016). In the Baltic Sea region there has been no changes in  
222 numbers between 1991 and 2010 (Aunis 2013). We also have found no significant changes in  
223 population size in our study area. Since this species requires patches of open water, we expected  
224 increasing numbers as was also seen for Scaup. Future observations may mimic changes found in  
225 Sweden where Nilsson and Haas (2016) showed populations to have increased between 1971 and  
226 2015. Tufted Ducks in the Odra River Estuary behave similarly to Scaup in that they form mixed  
227 flocks that eat the same type of food (Marchowski et al. 2016). In a greater scale, however,  
228 Tufted Ducks have a different migration and wintering strategy; Scaup jumps between hot spots  
229 and concentrate their numbers at a few areas, while Tufted Ducks are have a more diffuse  
230 distribution (van Erden and de Leeuw 2010; Scov et al. 2011; Carboneras and Kirwan 2016a;  
231 Carboneras and Kirwan 2016b). Tufted Ducks will disperse to smaller water bodies outside of  
232 our study area while Scaup almost exclusively remain in the Odra River Estuary (e.g.,  
233 Marchowski and Ławicki 2011; Marchowski et al. 2013).

### 234 *Pochard*

235 Pochard populations wintering in northern Europe have declined at an annual rate of -  
236 2.2%/year (Wetland International 2016). Pochard numbers in the Baltic Sea region have declined  
237 70% between 1991 and 2010 (Aunis 2013). In 1995 this species' numbers from north-east/north-  
238 west Europe population was estimated at 300,000 individuals (Delany et al. 1999) and with a  
239 constant -2.2%/year decline, total population size now would now be about 190,000 individuals.  
240 Our study found significant reduction in the Odra River Estuary counts of the Pochard (Table 3)  
241 reflecting this species' global decline (Aunis 2013; Wetland International 2016). Numbers of  
242 Pochard had been expected to be greater in the Odra River Estuary because of the decrease in ice

243 cover, but this species behaves more like the Tufted Duck than Scaup over winter in being more  
244 dispersed and occurring on smaller bodies of water (e.g. Marchowski and Ławicki 2011;  
245 Marchowski et al. 2013) meaning that individuals may be overwintering also outside the study  
246 area. The local decline, however, seems to be driven by the species' global decline despite the  
247 emergence of better conditions for wintering that might favor population growth.

#### 248 *Common Goldeneye*

249 Goldeneye populations wintering in northern, western and central Europe has been  
250 increasing at +1.5%/year (Wetland International 2016) and have increased in the Baltic Sea  
251 region by 50% between 1991 and 2010 (Aunis 2013). BirdLife International (2004) has estimated  
252 Goldeneye numbers to be about 1,430,000 individuals. In our work we found the Odra River  
253 Estuary to be of decreased importance for Goldeneye (Table 3), a trend opposite to this species'  
254 global situation (Aunis 2013; Wetland International 2016). Such situation can be explained by  
255 looking at this species' range and its behavior. The Goldeneye is short to medium distance  
256 migratory species (Carboneras et al. 2016). With global warming Goldeneye populations can  
257 remain nearer their to the main breeding distribution which is north and east from our study area.  
258 This behavior has been observed, e.g., Goldeneye numbers at Swedish wintering sites north of  
259 our study have increased (Nilsson and Haas 2016) and numbers at wintering sites in the  
260 Netherlands to the southwest have declined (Hornman et al. 2012).

#### 261 *Coot*

262 Coot populations wintering in northern and western Europe have been more or less  
263 stable, annual change has been calculated as -0.1%/year (Wetland International 2016), but for the  
264 Baltic Sea region there has been a 60% decline between 1991 and 2010 (Aunis 2013).

265 Population estimates (Delany et al. 1999) suggest coot numbers to be about 1,715,000  
266 individuals. We found no changes in coot numbers at the Odra River Estuary over the last 25  
267 years (Table 3). Wintering sites located in warmer areas to the southwest in the Netherlands  
268 showed no changes in the number between 1975 and 2010 (Hornman et al. 2012), but for  
269 wintering sites to the north in Sweden numbers have generally increased from 1971 to 2015  
270 except for a decline from 2004 to 2015 (Nilsson and Haas 2016). The expected increase in  
271 numbers due to the improvement in habitat quality was not observed. Factors such as pressure  
272 from American mink *Neovison vison*, which are responsible for the decline of Coot in many  
273 places (e.g., Ferreras and Macdonald 1999), may have held back potential increases.

#### 274 ***Smew***

275 Smew populations wintering in northern, western and central Europe have increased at  
276 +2.8%/year (Wetland International 2016) and for the Baltic Sea region numbers have increased  
277 30% between 1991 and 2010 (Aunis 2013). Delany et al. (1999) estimated the Smew population  
278 wintering in north-west and central Europe to be about 69,650 individuals. We found a decrease  
279 in importance at the Odra River Estuary for Smew (Table 3). As with the Goldeneye this  
280 observation can be explained by a shift further north and east in wintering area boundaries due to  
281 climate warming (Pavon-Jordan et al. 2015; Nilsson and Haas 2016).

#### 282 ***Goosander***

283 Goosander populations wintering in northern, western and central Europe have shown a  
284 slight decline, measured at -0.3%/year (Wetland International 2016); there were no significant  
285 change in numbers for the Baltic Sea between 1991 and 2010 (Aunis 2013). Delany et al. (1999)  
286 estimated the total Goosander population size to be about 250,500 individuals. We found a

287 decrease in the importance of Goosanders at the Odra River Estuary (Table 3). As with  
288 Goldeneye and Smew this observation can be explained by a shift further north and east in the  
289 wintering area boundaries due to climate warming (Hornman et al. 2012; Nilsson and Haas  
290 2016).

## 291 **Conclusion**

292         There is no doubt that climate is changing, global temperature has risen about 1°C over  
293 the last 130 years, and Northern Hemisphere temperatures of the last 30 years have been the  
294 highest in over 800 years (Stocker et al. 2013). The extent and duration of ice coverage in the  
295 Baltic has decreased on average by 50% over the last 36 year (Schröder 2015). There is evidence  
296 that the range and occurrence of migratory birds has changed in response to climate change and  
297 that some species have shortened their migratory movements by wintering closer to their  
298 breeding areas (Musil at al. 2011; Pavon-Jordan et al. 2015; Meller 2016). Assuming continued  
299 climate warming, the negative correlation of numbers of benthic feeding birds with the number  
300 of days with ice cover indicates that the Odra River Estuary becomes more important for this  
301 group of birds. These changes locally to the Odra River Estuary are impacted by a number of  
302 factors, most notably to climate change and changes in a species' total numbers. This second  
303 factor is probably responsible for the local decline of the Pochard. Climate change seems to be  
304 the primary reason for increases in the number of Scaup and decreases in the numbers of  
305 Goldeneye, Smew and Goosander.

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484 Table 1. Size of biogeographic population and annual trend in change for seven species of  
485 waterbirds using the Odra River Estuary.

Species	Base number of individuals	Base year	Population trend % p.a.
Greater Scaup	310,000	1991	-2.3
Tufted Duck	1,750,000	1995	+0.3
Common Pochard	300,000	1995	-2.2
Common Goldeneye	1,000,000	1990	+1.5
Eurasian Coot	1,750,000	1995	-0.1
Smew	40,000	1995	+2.8
Goosander	266,000	1995	-0.3

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Table 2. Results of generalized linear mixed models for seven species showing the influence of ice cover and season on percentage of occurrence of benthivores (denoted as B, Scaup, Tufted Duck, Pochard, Goldeneye, Coot) and piscivores (denoted as P, Smew, Goosander) species on the Odra River Estuary in relation to their biogeographic population.

Greater Scaup [B]	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t value	<i>P</i>
Intercept	-1008.828	403.639	43		
Ice cover	-0.689	0.221	43	-3.114	<b>0.003</b>
Season	0.523	0.201	43	2.601	<b>0.013</b>
Tufted Duck [B]					
Intercept	24.651	29.610	43	0.833	0.410
Ice cover	-0.104	0.016	43	-6.387	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Season	-0.012	0.015	43	-0.780	0.439
Common Pochard [B]					
Intercept	70.341	21.838	43		
Ice cover	-0.048	0.012	43	-3.985	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Season	-0.035	0.011	43	-3.192	<b>0.003</b>
Common Goldeneye [B]					
Intercept	32.068	8.885	41.30		
Ice cover	-0.021	0.005	29.32	-4.07	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Season	-0.016	0.004	41.31	-3.576	<b>0.001</b>
Eurasian Coot [B]					
Intercept	0.390	10.910	41.24		
Ice cover	-0.030	0.007	37.32	-4.617	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Season	<0.001	0.005	41.24	0.003	0.997
Smew [P]					
Intercept	803.944	202.418	43		
Ice cover	0.031	0.111	43	0.279	0.781
Season	-0.399	0.101	43	-3.958	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Goosander [P]					
Intercept	320.887	137.849	40.24		
Ice cover	0.085	0.087	42.93	0.979	0.333
Season	-0.158	0.069	40.24	-2.308	<b>0.026</b>

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539 Table 3. Changes in significance of Odra Estuary River (ORE) for biogeographical population (b.p) of  
 540 diving waterbirds showing percent of biogeographical population in 1991; percent of biogeographical  
 541 population in 2015; mean percent of biogeographical population in years 1991 – 2015  $\pm$  standard error;  
 542 and trend in changes of significance the area for the species in years 1991 – 2015.

Species	%b.p.1991	%b.p.2015	Mean1991– 2015 $\pm$ SE	Trend in ORE
Greater Scaup	6.58	12.18	8.70 $\pm$ 3.12	↑
Tufted Duck	1.97	4.74	1.25 $\pm$ 0.69	→
Common Pochard	1.64	0.51	0.51 $\pm$ 0.72	↓
Common Goldeneye	1.18	0.32	0.25 $\pm$ 0.43	↓
Eurasian Coot	0.49	0.51	0.35 $\pm$ 0.44	→
Smew	2.60	1.91	3.09 $\pm$ 2.58	↓
Goosander	6.07	1.82	3.32 $\pm$ 1.84	↓

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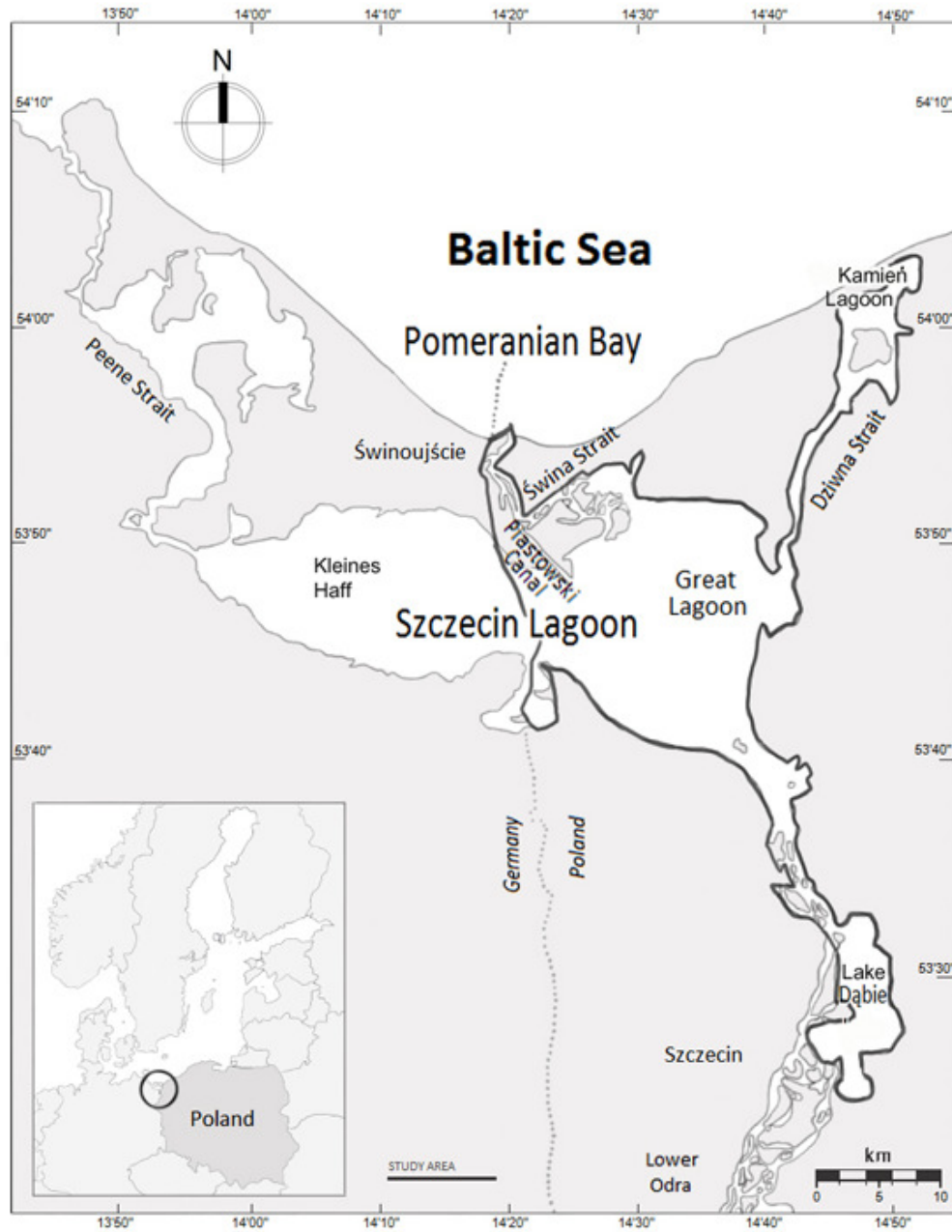
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Figure 1. The Odra River Estuary, northwestern Poland.





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