

**IBA CODE:** MN034

**IBA NAME:** DARKHAD DEPRESSION

**Aimags(s):** KHOVSGOL **Criteria:** A1, A3, A4i **Area:** 195,223 ha

**Coordinates:** 51°01'N 99°27'E **Altitude:** 1,538-1,970 m

### Protection status

Unprotected

### Site description

This beautiful depression in northern Mongolia contains a group of freshwater lakes, situated in Ulaan Uul, Renchinlkhumbé and Tsagaan Nuur soums of Khovsgol aimag. The depression is about 150 km long and 40 km wide, and is surrounded by high mountains. The depression receives water from many montane rivers, such as the Bagtakh, Khug, Ar Khoridol, Arsal, Sharga, Tengis and Shishkhed Rivers, and is thus rich in wetlands and lakes. These are surrounded by diverse habitats, including dry steppe, boreal forest (taiga) and alpine vegetation. The land is used as pasture for livestock and for preparing fodder. The area is suitable for recreation and ecotourism development.

### Importance for birds

Globally Threatened species found at the site are Pallas's Fish-eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus* (VU), Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* (VU), Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug* (EN), Lesser Kestrel *F. naumanni* (VU) and Great Bustard *Otis tarda* (VU). Also occurring are several species listed in the *Red Data Book of Mongolia*, such as Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*, Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*, Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus* and White Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*. The following

congregatory waterbird species occur in concentrations equivalent to at least 1% of their flyway populations: Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*, Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*, Gadwall *Anas strepera* and Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*. The site supports an assemblage of species restricted to the Eurasian steppe and desert biome, including Daurian Partridge *Perdix dauurica*, Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*, Demoiselle Crane *Anthropoides virgo*, Great Bustard and Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*.

### Importance for other fauna and flora

The site is not known to have special significance for species other than birds.

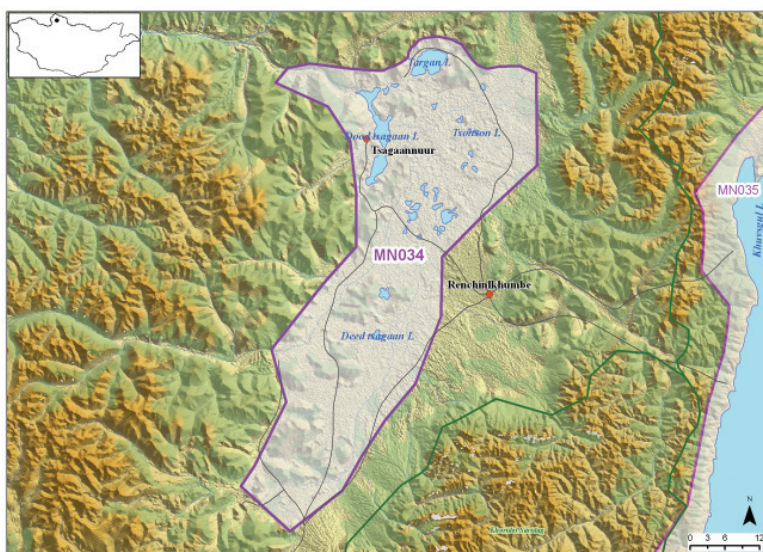


Photo: Mongolia-Japan Darkhad Basin Ecosystem Project