



ZARUDNIĪ, NIKOLAĪ ALEKSEEVICH

ZARUDNIĪ (Zarudny), **NIKOLAĪ ALEKSEEVICH** (b. Gryakovo, Kharkovsky, Ukraine, 13 September 1859; d. Tashkent, 17 March 1919), prominent zoologist and explorer of fauna in Iran ([FIGURE 1](#)). At the age of 11 he entered a military school in St. Petersburg, and in 1879 he was appointed a teacher of natural history at the Orenburg military school. He subsequently occupied the same position at military schools in Pskov (1892-1906) and in Tashkent (1906-19).

He published his first book, *Ornithological Fauna of the Orenburg Oblast*, in 1888, followed in 1896 by *Ornithological Fauna of the Caspian Region*, covering the results of five expeditions. Between 1884 and 1892, Zarudny conducted five long field trips in the Caspian region, northern Persia, the plains of Bukhara, as well as the Khiva (K̄iva) oasis. He was the first zoologist researcher of western Central Asia, an area not visited by any zoologist before him (see also [BIRDS IN IRAN](#), *EIr.* IV, esp. p. 267).

Zarudny conducted four more expeditions to Persia (1896, 1898, 1900-01, 1903-04), with the support of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Russian Geographic Society, and the St. Petersburg Zoological Institute. During his first and second trips he surveyed the mountainous [district of Birjand](#) in southeast Khorasan and the surrounding sandy deserts, as well as the Sistān depression (an important site of hibernation for birds originating from Central Asia). In 1900, he organized his third trip to eastern Persia, a route of 4,500 km in



length along the Iranian plateau in Khorasan and Persian Baluchistan, to Makran on the coast of the Indian Ocean. His team collected 3,140 specimens of birds, and about 50,000 specimens of insects (Bobrinsky, 1940).

For his study of the Persian fauna, the Russian Geographical Society twice awarded him the prestigious Przhevalsky Prize and the small gold medal. He also received the silver Przhevalsky medal for his research in Russia proper and in adjacent parts of Asia.

From 1906 onwards, he focused in Tashkent on the study of the ornithofauna of Central Asia and began systematic research in the ornithofauna of the central part of Russian Turkestan. From 1906 to 1912, Zarudny traveled in the vicinity of Tashkent, in the Tien Shan mountains, the Ferghana (Farġāna) valley, and in the Bukhara/Syr Darya basin from Chinaz to Perovsk (Kyzyl-Orda), in the center of the Kyzyl Kum (Qezel Qom) desert. In 1914, he noted the changes that had taken place in the configuration of the banks and islands of the Aral Sea since the expedition of L. S. Berg in 1902. During the last years of his life, Zarudny worked on a long-term project, which he intended to publish under the title of “Ornithological Fauna of the Turkestan Region,” but his death prevented its completion.

Zarudny’s collections enrich the museums of Russia and some foreign institutions, such as the Rothschild Natural History Museum in Tring, England. His tremendous collections include hundreds of thousands of items gathered in Persia, the Orenburg Oblast, Central Asia, and the Ukraine. At present, the main part of his collection is kept in the Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Some specimens are stored in Tashkent University. In 1918, he conducted a series of lectures at Tashkent University and organized the Turkestan Public Museum. More than 130 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, arthropods, and mollusks were named after this prominent naturalist, field researcher, and zoologist. He died from accidental poisoning in Tashkent at the age of sixty. His publications, including monographs, total 218.



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(Natalia Ananjeva)

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