Threatened Birds of Asia: The BirdLife International Red Data Book

Editors

N. J. COLLAR (Editor-in-chief),
A. V. ANDREEV, S. CHAN, M. J. CROSBY, S. SUBRAMANYA and J. A. TOBIAS

Maps by

RUDYANTO and M. J. CROSBY

Principal compilers and data contributors

BANGLADESH  P. Thompson
BHUTAN  R. Pradhan; C. Inskipp, T. Inskipp
CAMBODIA  Sun Hean; C. M. Poole
TAIWAN  Wild Bird Federation of Taiwan (BirdLife Partner): L. Liu Severinghaus; Chang Chin-lung, Chiang Ming-liang, Fang Woei-horng, Ho Yi-hsian, Hwang Kwang-yin, Lin Wei-yuan, Lin Wen-horn, Lo Hung-ren, Sha Chian-chung, Yau Cheng-teh.
KOREA  NORTH KOREA  Pak U-il; Chong Jong-ryol, Rim Chyun
SOUTH KOREA  Lee Woo-shin; Han Sang-hoon, Kim Jin-han, Lee Ki-sup, Park Jin-young
LAOS  K. Khoubolitine; W. J. Duckworth
MALAYSIA  Malaysian Nature Society (BirdLife Partner); K. Kumar, G. Noramly, M. J. Kohler
MONGOLIA  D. Batdelger; A. Bräunlich, N. Tseveenmyadag
MYANMAR  Khin Ma Ma Thwin
NEPAL  Bird Conservation Nepal (BirdLife Affiliate): H. S. Baral; C. Inskipp, T. P. Inskipp
PAKISTAN  Ornithological Society of Pakistan (BirdLife Affiliate)
PHILIPPINES  Haribon Foundation for Conservation of Natural Resources (BirdLife Partner); N. A. D. Mallari, B. R. Tabaranza, Jr.
SINGAPORE  The Nature Society (Singapore) (BirdLife Partner); Lim Kim Seng
SRI LANKA  Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka (BirdLife Affiliate); S. Kotagama; S. Aryaprema, S. Corea, J. P. G. Jones, U. Fernando, R. Perera, M. Siriwardhane, K. Weerakoon
THAILAND  Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BirdLife Partner); U. Treesucon; R. Jugmengkol, V. Kongthong, P. Poonsawad, P. D. Round, S. Supparatvikorn

VAURIE’S NIGHTJAR

*Caprimulgus centralasicus*

Data Deficient

**DISTRIBUTION**
The Vaurie’s Nightjar is known by a single record from the Taklimakan desert, Xinjiang, western China (see Remarks 1, 2).

**China** Xinjiang Pishan (Goma, Guma), female (originally identified as the nominate subspecies of Egyptian Nightjar *C. aegyptius aegyptius*) collected, 1,220 m, September 1929 (Ludlow and Kinnear 1933–1934, Vaurie 1960).

**POPULATION**
The population of this species is unknown, but it is presumably localised and scarce given that it is known only by one record of a single individual.

**ECOLOGY**

**Habitat**
The type specimen was collected in sandy scrub-jungle at 1,220 m (Ludlow and Kinnear 1933–1934, Vaurie 1960).

**Food**
Nothing is known, but the species presumably eats nocturnal flying insects (especially moths and beetles) like other members of its genus.

**Breeding**
Nothing is known.

**Migration**
The only known specimen was in active primary moult when collected (Vaurie 1960, also Cleere 1998), perhaps indicating that the species is resident in the region where it was collected.

The distribution of Vaurie’s Nightjar *Caprimulgus centralasicus*: (1) Pishan.

○ Historical (pre-1950)
THREATS The Vaurie’s Nightjar is the (now) one threatened member of the suite of two bird species that are entirely restricted to the “Taklimakan Desert Endemic Bird Area”, threats and conservation measures in which are profiled by Stattersfield et al. (1998).

Habitat loss There has been widespread degradation of the habitats of the Taklimakan Desert through the intensive grazing of goats and camels, extraction of fuelwood, and the conversion of huge areas to irrigated farmland (Grimmett 1991, Grimmett and Taylor 1992). In 1990, the habitats at the type locality, Guma, were found to have been irrigated and converted to agricultural land since the 1920s (Dissing et al. 1990; also Ludlow and Kinnear 1933–1934).

MEASURES TAKEN Protected areas There are several nature reserves in the Taklimakan desert which could support populations of this species, for example Arjin Shan Yeluotuo and Talimu Nature Reserves (see MacKinnon et al. 1996).

Research Dissing et al. (1990) and others (Ma Ming verbally 1998) recently searched for this species at the type locality and elsewhere in the Taklimakan Desert, but without any success.

MEASURES PROPOSED Legislation Vaurie’s Nightjar should be listed as a protected species in China (Liu Naifa in litt. 1997).

Research Further surveys should be conducted in and around the Taklimakan Desert to determine which nightjar species occur in this region (and therefore whether Vaurie’s Nightjar is a valid species), including studies of vocalisations and the use of mist-nets to allow birds to be examined in the hand. If it is a valid species, the surveys should aim to establish its distribution and habitat requirements, whether it is threatened by the environmental changes that are taking place in the region, and what measures are necessary for its conservation.

REMARKS (1) Cleere (1998) questioned the validity of this species, suggesting that the single specimen may prove to be an immature of the subspecies of Eurasian Nightjar C. europaeus plumipes which breeds in Xinjiang. (2) A report of specimens collected at a second locality (World Birdwatch 15(2) [1993]: 2) was found to refer to Eurasian Nightjar (World Birdwatch 15(4) [1993]: 3).