Otus scops -- (Linnaeus, 1758)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- STRIGIFORMES -- STRIGIDAE

Common names: Eurasian Scops-owl; Eurasian Scops Owl; European Scops Owl; Hibou Petit-duc

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status
LC -- Least Concern, (IUCN version 3.1)

Assessment Information

Year published:	2015
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Assessor(s):	BirdLife International
Reviewer(s):	Symes, A.
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Assessment Rationale

European regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)
EU27 regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)

At both European and EU27 scales this species has an extremely large range, and hence does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the range size criterion (Extent of Occurrence 10% in ten years or three generations, or with a specified population structure). The population trend is not known, but the population is not believed to be decreasing sufficiently rapidly to approach the thresholds under the population trend criterion (30% decline over ten years or three generations).

For these reasons the species is evaluated as Least Concern within both Europe and the EU27.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Albania; Andorra; Armenia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; France; Georgia; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Lithuania; Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of; Malta; Moldova; Montenegro; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; Gibraltar (to UK)

Vagrant:

Belgium; Denmark; Faroe Islands (to DK); Germany; Iceland; Ireland, Rep. of; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Sweden; United Kingdom

Population

The European population is estimated at 232,000-393,000 pairs, which equates to 463,000-785,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 64,900-126,000 pairs, which equates to 130,000-251,000 mature individuals. For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Trend

In Europe and the EU27 the population size trend is unknown. For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Habitats and Ecology

This species is found in semi-open areas which contain a mosaic of fallow land and copses and include old trees for daytime shelter and a breeding site. It also uses riverine forests, olive and almond groves, old fruit plantations, parks and gardens, tree-lined village streets and even town centres (Hagemeijer and Blair 1997). It is mostly monogamous but occasionally polygynous and breeds from May to June (Holt *et al.* 1999). The nest is usually a hole in a tree or occasionally in walls, ruins, on the ground and in the old nests of magpies or other corvids. No material is added and typically four eggs are laid (Mikkola 1983). It feeds mostly on insects

and other invertebrates and some small birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals (Holt *et al.* 1999). Northernmost populations are fully migratory, wintering from the Mediterranean to the Equator but most southern populations are partially migratory or sedentary (Hagemeijer and Blair 1997).

Habitats & Altitude

Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land		suitable	non-breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Pastureland		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Pastureland		suitable	non-breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Plantations		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Plantations		suitable	non-breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Rural Gardens		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Rural Gardens		suitable	non-breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Urban Areas		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Urban Areas		suitable	non-breeding
Forest - Boreal		suitable	breeding
Forest - Temperate		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		suitable	non-breeding
Altitude	max. 2000 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

Declines in this species are most likely down to habitat changes and a reduction in insect populations (Holt *et al.* 1999), probably from the use of pesticides (König 2008). The spread of large-scale farming, modernisation of agricultural methods and the reduction in the number of hollow trees may have driven its extirpation from areas in France and Spain (Holt *et al.* 1999, König 2008). In Switzerland, suitable habitat has been fragmented by spread of viniculture and agricultural intensification (Holt *et al.* 1999). Locally, increases in predator populations, such as Tawny owls (*Strix aluco)* may lead to decreases in this species (König 2008). Hunting, along migration routes in Italy and Malta, are also thought to impact the species (Tucker and Heath 1994).

Threats & Impacts

Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry farming	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (intentional use - species is the target)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases	Tawny Owl (Strix aluco)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Pollution	Herbicides and pesticides	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Indirect ecosystem effects			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

CITES Appendix II. Bern Convention Appendix II. The provision of nest boxes has proven effective for this species in various countries (Tucker and Heath 1994).

Conservation Actions Proposed

Reducing the use of highly toxic pesticides that accumulate in insectivores, combined with reducing broad-spectrum insecticides would be beneficial for this species. Old trees should be preserved and where appropriate (Tucker and Heath 1994), nest boxes should be provided (König 2008, Tucker and Heath 1994). In areas of high hunting pressure, protection of this and other species should be enforced and awareness campaigns developed to inform hunters of the need for conservation measures for this species (Tucker and Heath 1994).

Bibliography

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Mikkola, H. 1983. *Owls of Europe*. T&D Poyser, London.

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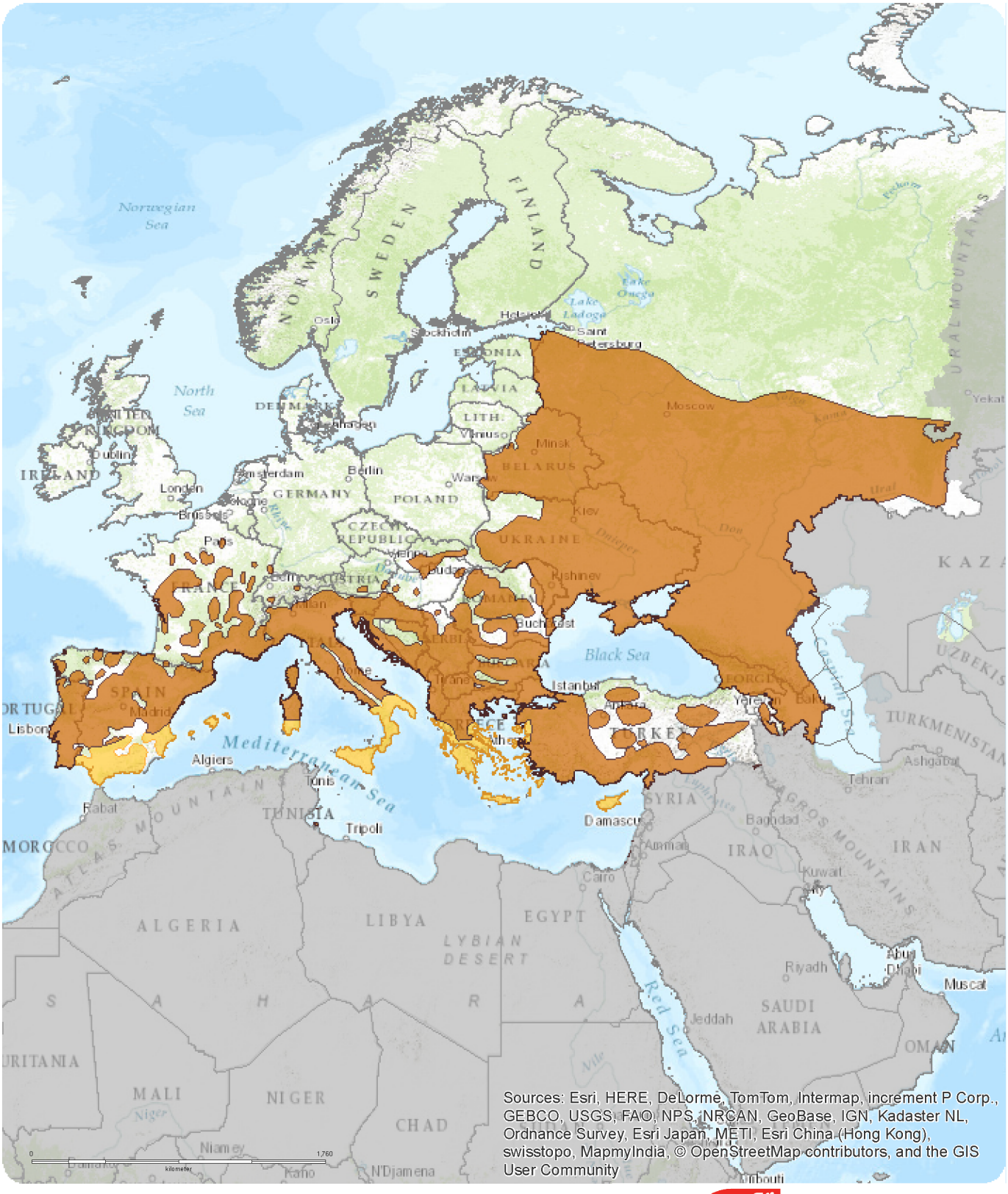
Map (see overleaf)



Otus scops

NE | DD | LC LEAST CONCERN | NT | VU | EN | CR | EW | EX

Range

- Extant (breeding)
- Extant (resident)

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BirdLife International (2015)
European Red List of Birds

Map created 05/12/2015

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