

Columba trocaz -- Heineken, 1829

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- COLUMBIFORMES -- COLUMBIDAE

Common names: Madeira Laurel-pigeon; Long-toed Pigeon; Trocaz Pigeon

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status

LC -- Least Concern, (IUCN version 3.1)

Assessment Information

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Assessment Rationale

European regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)

EU27 regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)

At both European and EU27 scales, although this species may have a small range it is not believed to 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 appears to be stable, and hence the species does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable 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:

Portugal

Population

The European population is estimated at 10,000-14,000 mature individuals, which equates to 10,000-14,000 mature individuals. The entire population is found in the EU27. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Trend

In Europe and the EU27 the population size is estimated to be stable. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Habitats and Ecology

The species is dependent on laurel (*Laurus*) forest on Madeira, which is mainly found on the north-facing slopes of the island although there are also isolated pockets of forest in the south (Tucker and Heath 1994). It occurs in the high forest zone which is often covered in clouds. The species nests all year round but mainly between February and June. It lays one egg. The nest is an untidy heap of sticks placed in crevices and caves in inaccessible cliffs and occasionally in heather and laurels (Baptista et al. 1997). It feeds mainly on the berries of *Laurus azorica* which is the most common tree in the laurel forest (Tucker and Heath 1994). It also eats the fruit of *Ocotea foetens*, *Persea indica*, *Appolonias barbujana*, *Myrica faya*, *Clethra arborea* and *Piconia exelsa* (Zino and Zino 1986, Jones 1988, Tucker and Heath 1994). When food resources in the forest are scarce the species moves to agricultural areas where it feeds on cabbages, watercress and fruit trees (Tucker and Heath 1994). The species is sedentary but may move from cliffs to lowland areas to feed (Baptista et al. 1997).

Habitats & Altitude

Habitat (level 1 - level 2)	Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land	suitable	non-breeding

Habitats & Altitude			
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Caves and Subterranean Habitats (non-aquatic) - Caves		suitable	resident
Forest - Subtropical/Tropical Moist Lowland		major	resident
Altitude	max. 850 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

Habitat loss threatens this species as laurel forests have been reduced to only 13.5% of surface area of Madeira (Baptista et al. 1997). Fires, as result of burning to improve pasture, destroy or degrade forest (Gibbs et al. 2001) and goats and pigs also cause some destruction (Baptista et al. 1997). It is regarded as a pest by farmers and is still shot when it invades arable land during food shortages. The species also suffers losses to predation by Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*) (Gibbs et al. 2001).

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
		Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry grazing, ranching or farming	Ongoing	Whole (>90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (intentional use - species is the target)	Ongoing	Whole (>90%)	Negligible declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases	Black Rat (<i>Rattus rattus</i>)	Ongoing	Whole (>90%)	Negligible declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Natural system modifications	Increase in fire frequency/intensity	Ongoing	Whole (>90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

EU Birds Directive Annex I. The species now protected under European law, and farmers are provided with bird-scarers. Its native laurel forests are now protected (Baptista et al. 1997). A Species Action Plan was published in 1996 (Oliveira and Heredia 1996) and reviewed in 2010 (Barov and Derhé 2010).

Conservation Actions Proposed

Continued survival of species depends directly on protection of habitat and strict control of hunting, and perhaps also of rats (Baptista et al. 1997). The implementation of the management plan should be maintained and improved and monitoring schemes should be continued. Ensure authorities have appropriate means to prevent and extinguish fires in the Laurel forest. Awareness campaigns and increased funding should be provided for the scaring devices project. Research on breeding success, habitat preferences and factors contributing to expansion movements outside laurel forest areas should be conducted. In addition investigation into the impact of rats and their population dynamics should be carried out. Continue monitoring rat control (Barov and Derhé 2010).

Bibliography

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European Regional Assessment



Columba trocaz

Range

■ Extant (resident)

Citation:
BirdLife International (2015)
European Red List of Birds



Map created 05/12/2015



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