

Accipiter nisus -- (Linnaeus, 1758)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- ACCIPITRIFORMES -- ACCIPITRIDAE

Common names: Eurasian Sparrowhawk; Epervier d'Europe; European Sparrowhawk; Sparrowhawk

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status

LC -- Least Concern, (IUCN version 3.1)

Assessment Information

Year published:	2015
Date assessed:	2015-03-31
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Reviewer(s):	Symes, A.
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Assessment Rationale

European regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)

EU 27 regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)

In Europe 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 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 in Europe.

Within the EU27 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). Despite the fact that the population trend appears to be decreasing, the decline is not believed to be sufficiently rapid to 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 in the EU27.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Albania; Andorra; Armenia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland, Rep. of; Italy; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of; Malta; Moldova; Montenegro; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Canary Is. (to ES); Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Gibraltar (to UK)

Vagrant:

Faroe Islands (to DK); Iceland; Svalbard and Jan Mayen (to NO)

Population

The European population is estimated at 403,000-582,000 pairs, which equates to 805,000-1,160,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 214,000-357,000 pairs, which equates to 428,000-714,000 mature individuals. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Trend

In Europe the population size is estimated to be stable. In the EU27 the population size is estimated to be decreasing by less than 25% in 21.6 years (three generations). For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Habitats and Ecology

The species is migratory in the north of its range, with these birds wintering in southern Europe, southern Asia and less commonly in Africa (Meyburg and Marks 2014). Further south, birds tend to be resident or

dispersive (Ferguson-Lees and Christie 2001, Meyburg and Marks 2014). Migrants move south between July and November, returning between March and June (Snow and Perrins 1998). Birds are generally solitary, except when nesting, and tend to migrate singly although large concentrations do form at narrow sea crossings (Ferguson-Lees and Christie 2001). It mainly inhabits forest, although preferring this to be interspersed with open areas. Small birds make up the vast majority of its diet. The nest is built in the lower crown of trees, on a fork or branch. A new nest is built each year by both sexes and is a platform of sticks with little or no greenery. It typically lays three to six eggs (Meyburg and Marks 2014).

Habitats & Altitude			
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land		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
Forest - Temperate		suitable	non-breeding
Shrubland - Boreal		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		suitable	non-breeding
Shrubland - Temperate		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Temperate		suitable	non-breeding
Altitude	0-4500 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

Widespread persecution, especially from gamekeepers, in the 20th century caused large numbers of the birds to be killed (Ferguson-Lees and Christie 2001, Meyburg and Marks 2014). Sharp declines in Europe in the 1950s and 1960s were driven by the use of harmful organochlorine pesticides, which causes direct mortality of adults as well as reduced breeding success. The species is still trapped in its thousands annually in Turkey, where it is used by falconers, but habitat alteration is thought to be the major contemporary threat (Meyburg and Marks 2014). It is also highly vulnerable to the impacts of potential wind energy developments (Strix 2012).

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry plantations	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (persecution/control)	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Energy production & mining	Renewable energy	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Pollution	Herbicides and pesticides	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Indirect ecosystem effects; Species mortality; Reduced reproductive success			

Conservation Actions Underway

Bern Convention Appendix II. CITES Appendix II. CMS Appendix II. EU Birds Directive Annex I. The species has recovered in range and numbers from 1970 to 1990 due to the ban on organochloride pesticides. It has also recovered in areas where persecution has been controlled (Meyburg and Marks 2014) and illegal killing is no longer a serious threat (Meyburg and Schmidt 2006).

Conservation Actions Proposed

Pesticide use should be reduced and maintained and agricultural practices should support large populations of songbirds. Trapping and hunting restrictions should be enforced. During the breeding season, forestry operations should be avoided. The placement of wind turbines should be considered carefully to minimise mortality in this and other species.

Bibliography

Ferguson-Lees, J. and Christie, D.A. 2001. *Raptors of the world*. Christopher Helm, London.

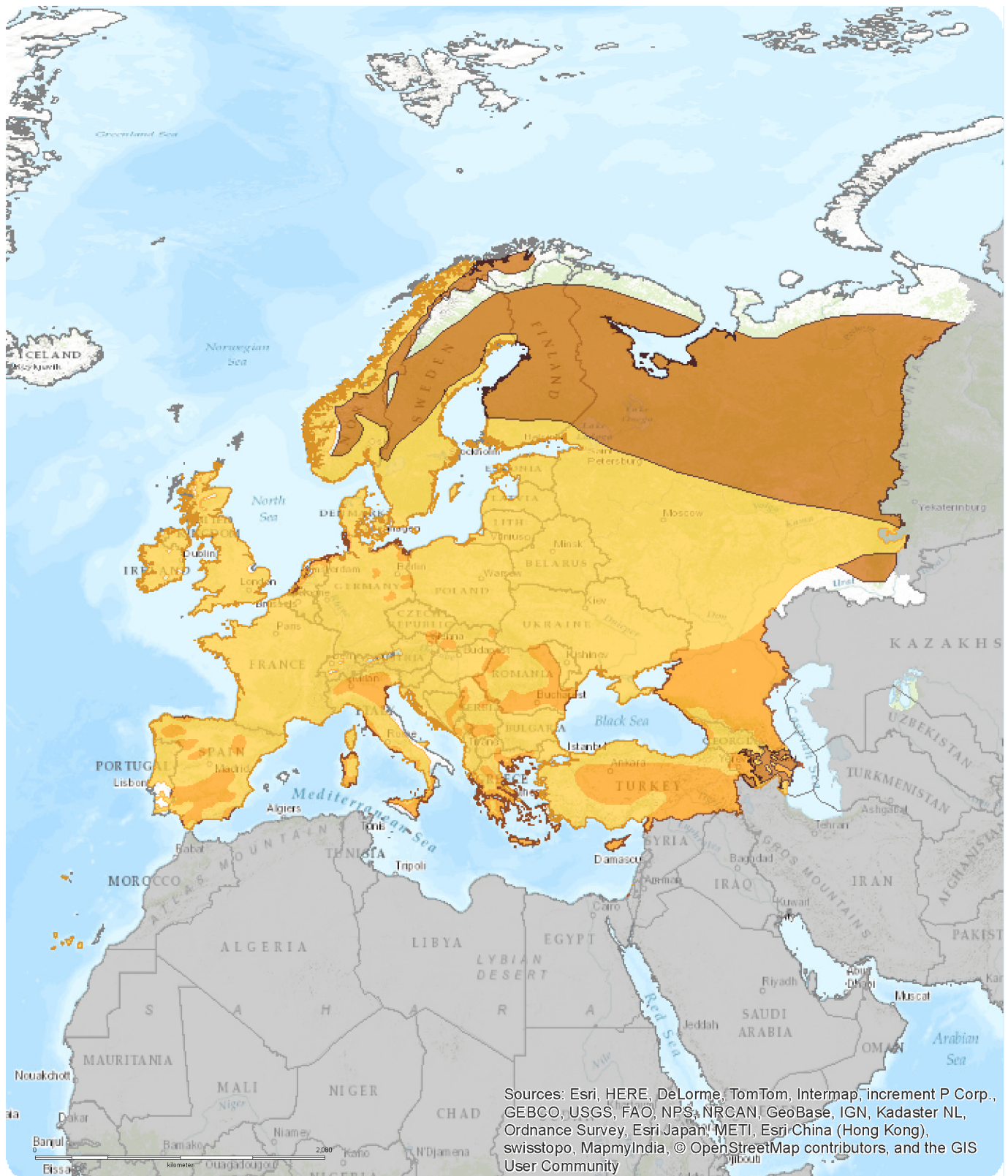
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Map (see overleaf)

European Regional Assessment



Accipiter nisus

Range

- Extant (breeding)
- Extant (non breeding)
- Extant (resident)

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



Map created 05/12/2015



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