

Gavia stellata -- (Pontoppidan, 1763)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- GAVIIFORMES -- GAVIIDAE

Common names: Red-throated Loon; Plongeon catmarin; Red-throated Diver

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.
Compiler(s):	Ashpole, J., Burfield, I., Ieronymidou, C., Pople, R., Tarzia, M., Wheatley, H. & Wright, L.

Assessment Rationale

European regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)

EU27 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 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 in Europe.

Within the EU27 this species has a very 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 the EU27.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Austria; Azerbaijan; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Faroe Islands (to DK); Greenland (to DK); Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland, Rep. of; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of; Moldova; Montenegro; Netherlands; Norway; Svalbard and Jan Mayen (to NO); Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom

Origin Uncertain:

Albania

Vagrant:

Armenia; Belarus; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Liechtenstein; Luxembourg; Malta; Canary Is. (to ES); Gibraltar (to UK)

Population

The European population is estimated at 42,100-93,000 pairs, which equates to 84,200-186,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 3,100-5,000 pairs, which equates to 6,100-10,000 mature individuals. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Trend

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

Habitats and Ecology

On migration this species may form large flocks of 200–1,200 individuals, with similar concentrations

occurring on rich marine fishing grounds during the winter (Carboneras et al. 2014). The species breeds on freshwater pools or lakes in open moorland, blanket bogs (Carboneras et al. 2014) or open and wet peatland habitats (Campbell 1987). Outside of the breeding season the species frequents inshore waters along sheltered coasts, occasionally occurring inland (Carboneras et al. 2014) on lakes, pools, reservoirs and rivers (Snow and Perrins 1998). Its diet consists predominantly of fish as well as crustaceans, molluscs, frogs, fish spawn (Carboneras et al. 2014), aquatic insects, annelid worms (Snow and Perrins 1998) and plant matter (Carboneras et al. 2014). In winter its diet is almost predominantly fish, and in the Baltic Sea they opportunistically feed on spawning Herring, Smelt and Percids.

Habitats & Altitude		
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)	Importance	Occurrence
Marine Neritic - Estuaries	suitable	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Macroalgal/Kelp	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Pelagic	suitable	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Seagrass (Submerged)	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Loose Rock/pebble/gravel	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Rock and Rocky Reefs	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Sandy	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Sandy-Mud	major	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands	major	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)	suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Marshes/Pools (under ha)	suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Tundra Wetlands (incl. pools and temporary waters from snowmelt)	major	breeding
Altitude	max. 500 m	Occasional altitudinal limits

Threats

When breeding the species is threatened by water level fluctuations and acidification of breeding waters heavy metal pollution and the afforestation of peatland or moorland habitats (Carboneras et al. 2014). It is also sensitive to human disturbance from recreational activities and shoreline development (e.g. construction work near breeding lakes) (Meek et al. 1993) and will desert sites if there is too much human activity (Carboneras et al. 2014). During the winter the species is highly vulnerable to coastal oil spills, especially in areas where large concentrations form (e.g. on rich fishing grounds) (Skov et al. 2011, Carboneras et al. 2014). The North, Baltic and Mediterranean Seas have experienced severe oil spill events in the past, and remain regions at risks of future spills particularly with expanding oil exploration activity. This species is also highly sensitive to disturbance from coastal wind farms (wind turbines) during winter, causing a risk for habitat displacement and collision (Garthe and Huppopp 2004, Bradbury et al. 2014). The species suffers mortality at sea and on large lakes due to entanglement and drowning in inshore gillnets (Carboneras et al. 2014), with potentially significant impacts on the breeding and wintering population within the Baltic Sea, where large numbers of birds overlap with intensive gillnet fisheries (Žydelis et al. 2013). It is also highly sensitive to disturbance at sea, particularly from vessel traffic along shipping lanes, a particular problem in North Sea and the Baltic region due to high numbers of vessels passing (Schwemmer et al. 2011) It is susceptible to avian influenza so may be threatened by future outbreaks of the virus (Melville and Shortridge 2006). As a species which breeds in the Arctic it is likely to be affected by impacts from climate change, including habitat changes and prey availability (Ganter et al. 2014).

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Biological resource use	Fishing & harvesting aquatic resources (unintentional effects: (large scale) [harvest])	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Rapid Declines	High Impact
		Stresses			
Climate change & severe weather	Habitat shifting & alteration	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation; Indirect ecosystem effects					

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Energy production & mining	Mining & quarrying	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation; Indirect ecosystem effects; Species disturbance			
Energy production & mining	Oil & gas drilling	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species disturbance			
Energy production & mining	Renewable energy	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality; Species disturbance			
Human intrusions & disturbance	Recreational activities	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species disturbance; Reduced reproductive success			
Natural system modifications	Other ecosystem modifications	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation; Indirect ecosystem effects			
Pollution	Garbage & solid waste	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Pollution	Industrial & military effluents (type unknown/unrecorded)	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Pollution	Oil spills	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Past, Likely to Return	Majority (50-90%)	Rapid Declines	Past Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation; Indirect ecosystem effects; Species mortality			
Transportation & service corridors	Shipping lanes	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species disturbance			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

The species is listed on Annex II of the Convention on Migratory Species, and is listed under the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. Listed on Annex II of the Bern Convention, and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. Listed as critically endangered on the HELCOM convention. There are 58 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas for this species. Within the EU it occurs and is protected in 426 Special Protection Areas. Since the 1970s, conservation work in Finland has included building artificial rafts for this species to reduce predation risk, which has led to higher breeding success in some areas. Within the North Sea (Germany) work is underway to test alternative fishing gears to gillnets, while in Lithuania gillnet bycatch mitigation is being trialled.

Conservation Actions Proposed

Development of mitigation measures for gillnet bycatch for commercial and artisanal fishing vessels. Prevention of chronic oil pollution and oil spill events, and development of rapid, trans-boundary plans for oil spill response. Protection of feeding grounds, and regulations for vessel traffic, management of recreational

activities at important breeding and non-breeding sites, careful siting of windfarms away from critical habitat or migration pathways.

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Map (see overleaf)

European Regional Assessment



Gavia stellata

Range

- Extant (breeding)
- Extant (non breeding)

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

Map created 05/12/2015

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