

Lanius collurio -- Linnaeus, 1758

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- PASSERIFORMES -- LANIIDAE

Common names: Red-backed Shrike; Pie-grièche écorcheur

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
Assessor(s):	BirdLife International
Reviewer(s):	Symes, A.
Compiler(s):	Ashpole, J., Burfield, I., Ieronymidou, C., Pople, R., 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 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; 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; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom

Vagrant:

Faroe Islands (to DK); Iceland; Ireland, Rep. of; Canary Is. (to ES); Gibraltar (to UK)

Population

The European population is estimated at 7,440,000-14,300,000 pairs, which equates to 14,900,000-28,600,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 3,500,000-6,790,000 pairs, which equates to 7,000,000-13,600,000 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 12 years (three generations). For details of national estimates, see

[Supplementary PDF](#).

Habitats and Ecology

The species breeds in temperate and Mediterranean climates (Lefranc and Worfolk 1997). It requires sunny, warm, usually dry, and level or gently sloping terrain, with scattered bushes, shrubs or low trees providing hunting posts overlooking areas of short grass, heath or bare soil. High-quality habitats tend to feature mosaic-like grassy vegetation with alternating areas of tall and short growth and bare areas, with perches. In agricultural areas occupies neglected overgrown patches, heaths, open downs, overgrown orchards and gardens, hedgerows, and scrub along railways or roadsides. It is found also in temporary steppe-like habitats, such as military training areas, burned forests, forest clearings and spruce (*Picea*) plantations (Yosef *et al.* 2012). Egg-laying occurs from May to July (Lefranc and Worfolk 1997) and clutches are generally three to seven eggs. The untidy-looking nest is a loose foundation of often green plant stems, roots, grass, lichen, hair, or similar, compactly lined with grass, hair, moss, fur, reed (*Phragmites*) or reedmace (*Typha*) flowerheads, plant down and similar material, situated in dense, often thorny bush such as hawthorn (*Crataegus*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), bramble (*Rubus*) or dog-rose (*Rosa*) (Yosef *et al.* 2012). It is an opportunistic feeder, feeding mostly on insects and other invertebrates as well as small mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles. The species is migratory, wintering in eastern and southern Africa (Lefranc and Worfolk 1997).

Habitats & Altitude			
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Pastureland		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Plantations		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Rural Gardens		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Urban Areas		suitable	breeding
Forest - Boreal		suitable	breeding
Forest - Temperate		suitable	breeding
Grassland - Subtropical/Tropical High Altitude		suitable	breeding
Grassland - Temperate		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Temperate		suitable	breeding
Altitude	max. 3200 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

Declines are probably due mainly to the loss and fragmentation of habitat resulting from afforestation and agricultural intensification, and the increased use of pesticides causing loss of food resources (Yosef *et al.* 2012). The heavy application of inorganic nitrogen fertilizer causing the earlier and denser growth of vegetation may also be a threat (Tucker and Heath 1994). In northern and western edges of range, its breeding is affected by cooler, wetter summers (Yosef *et al.* 2012).

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry farming	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry plantations	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion			
Climate change & severe weather	Temperature extremes	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Indirect ecosystem effects			

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Pollution	Agricultural & forestry effluents (nutrient loads)	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Pollution	Herbicides and pesticides	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Indirect ecosystem effects			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

Bern Convention Appendix II. EU Birds Directive Annex I.

Conservation Actions Proposed

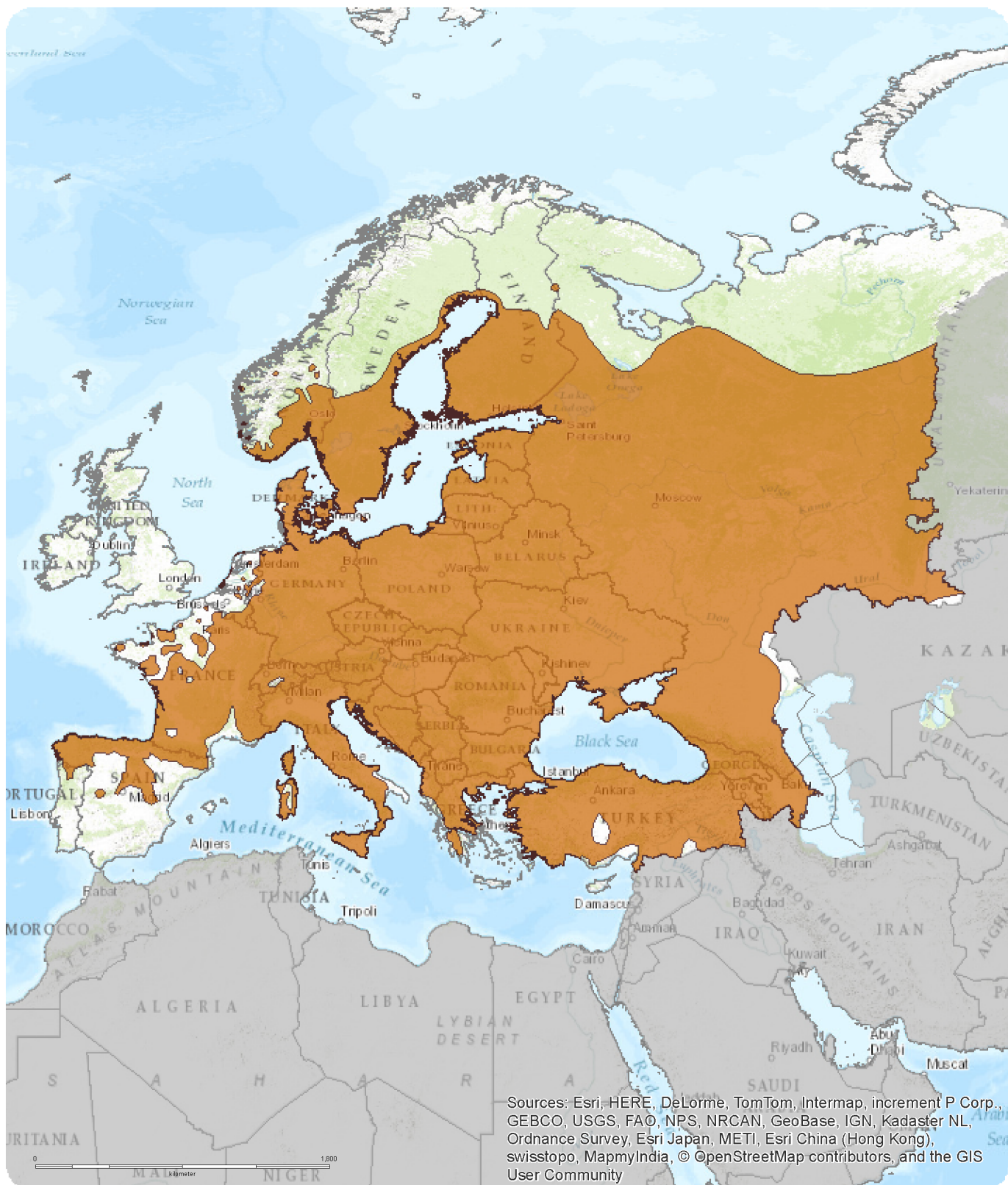
The species requires wide-scale habitat conservation through the promotion of low intensity farming. Management should include the conservation or creation of open grasslands with a mixture of tall and low vegetation and thorny bushes, conservation of hedges and bushes bordering fields, the planting of bushes in intensively managed orchards and vineyards and the maintenance of fallow areas. In addition the linking of suitable habitat fragments by a series of protected areas would likely benefit the species. The use of broad-spectrum pesticides should also be reduced (Tucker and Heath 1994).

Bibliography

- Lefranc, N. and Worfolk, T. 1997. *Shrikes: a guide to the shrikes of the world*. A&C Black.
- Tucker, G.M. and Heath, M.F. 1994. *Birds in Europe: their conservation status*. BirdLife Conservation Series no. 3, BirdLife International, Cambridge.
- Yosef, R., International Shrike Working Group and Christie, D.A. 2012. Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Sargatal, J., Christie, D.A. and de Juana, E. (eds.). 2012. *Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from <http://www.hbw.com/node/60470> on 6 March 2015).

Map (see overleaf)

European Regional Assessment



Lanius collurio

Range

Extant (breeding)

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



Map created 05/12/2015

