**Nucifraga caryocatactes -- (Linnaeus, 1758)**

**ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- PASSERIFORMES -- CORVIDAE**

**Common names:** Spotted Nutcracker; Nutcracker

**European Red List Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European Red List Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LC -- Least Concern, (IUCN version 3.1)</td>
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</table>

**Assessment Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year published:</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date assessed:</td>
<td>2015-03-31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessor(s):</td>
<td>BirdLife International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer(s):</td>
<td>Symes, A.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compiler(s):</td>
<td>Ashpole, J., Burfield, I., Ieronymidou, C., Pople, R., Wheatley, H. &amp; Wright, L.</td>
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**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 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 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 the EU27.

**Occurrence**

**Countries/Territories of Occurrence**

**Native:**
- Albania; Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of; Montenegro; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Ukraine

**Vagrant:**
- Luxembourg; Portugal; Turkey; United Kingdom

**Population**

The European population is estimated at 370,000-1,100,000 pairs, which equates to 739,000-2,200,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 124,000-272,000 pairs, which equates to 249,000-544,000 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 trend is unknown. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

**Habitats and Ecology**

This species occupies coniferous forest and mixed conifer and birch (Betula) forest where conifers predominate and is found from taiga lowlands (Madge 2009) up to 2,300 m in the Alps (Hagemeijer and Blair 1997). In continental Europe it mainly inhabits mountain forests, especially where forests broken by clearings and alpine meadows. Prime habitat in Europe is composed of Norway spruce (Picea abies) and Swiss pine (Pinus cembra); mixed forests of silver fir (Abies alba), Scots pine (Pinus sylvestris), black pine (Pinus nigra) and Macedonian pine (Pinus peuce) also important, especially if hazel (Corylus) also present (Madge 2009).
Breeding begins from March and clutches are usually three or four eggs (Madge and Burn 1993). The nest is a mass of twigs and branches, intertwined with bramble (Rubus) shoots and lichens, with a deep cup, lined with soft plant materials, including willow (Salix) seeds, mosses and lichens. It is normally placed around six metres from the ground close to main trunk of a conifer. Its primary food is pine nuts, particularly those of Siberian pine. It is a specialized nut-eater and has a prominent ridge inside base of lower mandible serving as ideal nut-cracking tool. During the spring and summer it also takes a wide variety of invertebrates, small rodents and small birds (Madge 2009). The species is highly resident in its breeding areas (Hagemeijer and Blair 1997).

### Habitats & Altitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat (level 1 - level 2)</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artificial/Terrestrial - Urban Areas</td>
<td>marginal</td>
<td>non-breeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest - Boreal</td>
<td>major</td>
<td>resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest - Temperate</td>
<td>major</td>
<td>resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altitude</td>
<td>max. 2300 m</td>
<td>Occasional altitudinal limits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Threats

There are currently no known significant threats to this species.

### Conservation Actions Underway

Bern Convention Appendix II. There are currently no known specific conservation measures for this species.

### Conservation Actions Proposed

No conservation measures are currently needed for this species.

### Bibliography


Nucifraga caryocatactes

Range

Extant (resident)

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

Map created 05/12/2015