Emberiza schoeniclus -- (Linnaeus, 1758)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- PASSERIFORMES -- EMBERIZIDAE

Common names: Reed Bunting; Common Reed Bunting

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., van Kleunen A., Wheatley, H. & Wright, L.

Assessment Rationale

European regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)
EU27 regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)

At both European and EU27 scales 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 within both Europe and the EU27.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Albania; Armenia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Faroe Islands (to DK); 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; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom

Vagrant:

Iceland; Gibraltar (to UK)

Population

The European population is estimated at 4,060,000-7,020,000 pairs, which equates to 8,130,000-14,000,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 1,850,000-3,260,000 pairs, which equates to 3,700,000-6,510,000 mature individuals. For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Trend

In Europe and the EU27 the population size is estimated to be decreasing by less than 25% in 10.8 years (three generations). For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Habitats and Ecology

Generally this species inhabits marshy areas with dense low vegetation types in (small) wetlands, such as fens, bogs, reed marshes, riversides and other inland waters. In Siberia it breeds in willow thickets in floodplains. In some regions the species has colonised drier habitats such as young woodland and farmland (maize, cereals and oil-seed rape fields) (Hagemeijer & Blair 1997, Copete 2011). Oil-seed rape fields have even become the most important breeding habitat for the species in lowland Britain (Gruar et al. 2006). The breeding season starts in early April and ends in August, depending on latitude and altitude. The species is mostly monogamous. The nest is built by the female, mostly on the ground, but sometimes in shrubs. The

clutch, usually four or five eggs is incubated by both sexes. The chicks hatch after 12–15 days. They are fed by both parents and leave the nest after 9–12 days. The diet consists mainly of invertebrates during the breeding season and mainly seeds and other plant material at other times of the year. The species is partly migratory, in particular the northern and western European breeding birds, depending on the mean winter temperature. During the winter the species is also found in open fields, agricultural areas and woodland clearings (Copete 2011). Nowadays, in Central Europe it favours fallow and stubble fields overgrown with Chenopodium album and Amaranthus retroflexus forming important winter food sources for the species (Orlowki & Czarnecka 2007).

Habitats & Altitude

Habitat (level 1 - level 2)	Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land	suitable	resident
Forest - Temperate	suitable	breeding
Forest - Temperate	suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands	suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands	suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)	suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)	suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Marshes/Pools (under ha)	suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Marshes/Pools (under ha)	suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Seasonal/Intermittent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)	suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Seasonal/Intermittent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)	suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Shrub Dominated Wetlands	suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Shrub Dominated Wetlands	suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Tundra Wetlands (incl. pools and temporary waters from snowmelt)	suitable	breeding
Altitude	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

Agricultural intensification is considered the main cause of the decline of the species in Europe and especially the endangered subspecies *E. s. witherbyi* and *E. s. lusitanica* (Vera et al. 2014). In particular the availability of winter food in farmland has declined as a consequence of crop change and the use of herbicides, resulting in the disappearance of weed-rich stubbles, and the use of advanced technologies reducing the amount of spilled grain (Peach et al. 1999, Orlowki & Czarnecka 2007). In addition the destruction of wetlands and unfavourable management (e.g. intensive reed cutting) is another important threat to the species, including the endangered subspecies *E. s. witherbyi* and *E. s. lusitanica* (Vera et al. 2014).

Threats & Impacts

Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry farming	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation			
Biological resource use	Gathering terrestrial plants (unintentional effects - species is not the target)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation			
Natural system modifications	Abstraction of surface water (unknown use)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Pollution	Herbicides and pesticides	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Indirect ecosystem effects			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

The Mediterranean subspecies (*E. s. witherbyi*) and the north-western Iberian subspecies (*E. s. lusitanica*) are

classified as Endangered in the Spanish Red List (Atienza & Copete 2014). The species has been moved from the Red to the Amber list of Birds of Conservation Concern in Britain (Eaton et al. 2009).

Conservation Actions Proposed

Implement marsh bird-friendly management of wetlands, for example avoid complete mowing or burning of older reed beds (Pasinelli & Schiegg 2012, Vera et al. 2014). Wintering habitat should be improved by preserving stubble fields. In addition the presence of heavily overgrown root crop and vegetable stubbles should be allowed to ensure the spontaneous regeneration of plant cover on fallows. These objectives should be promoted as part of agri-environmental schemes or within set-aside land options (Orlowki & Czarnecka 2007).

Special attention should be paid to safeguard the small remaining populations of the endangered subspecies *E. s. witherbyi* and *E. s. lusitanica* by conducting annual censuses of the subspecies's population numbers, protecting all wetlands where it still occurs and conducting research on its taxonomy and ecology, in particular the species habitat requirements and pressures limiting the population. Other measures include compiling a national subspecies action plan; promoting extensive agricultural practices in areas surrounding the species's habitat in particular with regard to the use of insecticides; and maintaining fallow and stubble fields near its breeding areas as wintering feeding habitat (Atienza & Copete 2014).

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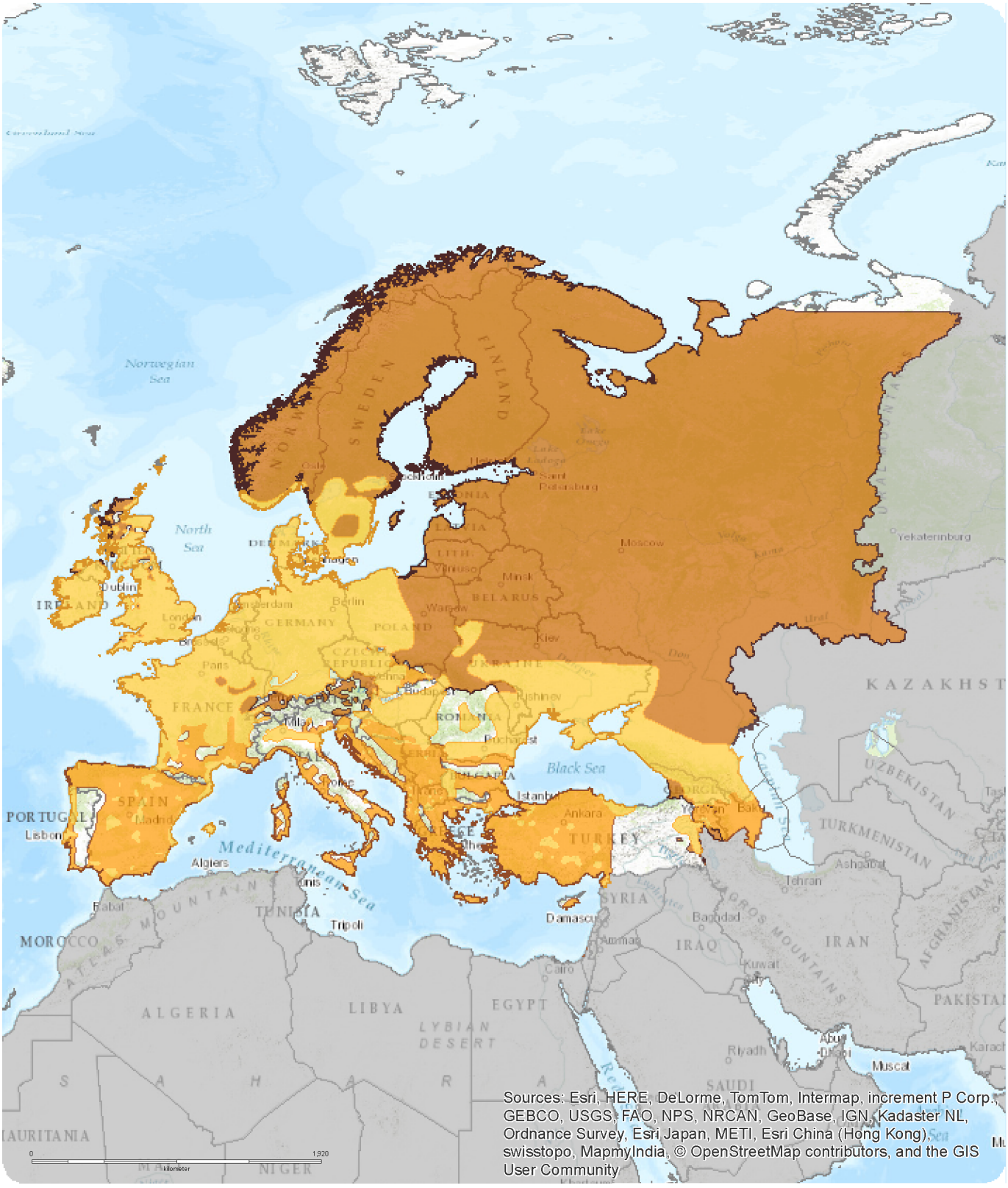
Map (see overleaf)



Emberiza schoeniclus

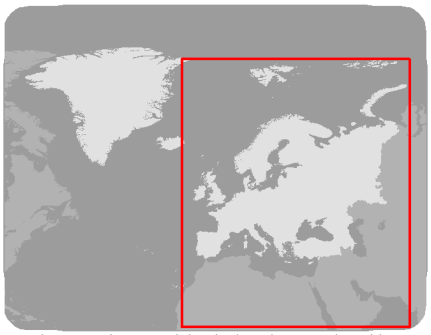
NE | DD | LC LEAST CONCERN | NT | VU | EN | CR | EW | EX

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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