[**HBW / BirdLife Taxonomic Checklist v8 (current version)**](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/HBW-BirdLife_Checklist_v8_Dec23.zip.)

BirdLife International uses the taxonomy published in the two volumes (2014 and 2016) of the *HBW and BirdLife International Illustrated Checklist of the Birds of the World* and subsequent annual updates.

BirdLife uses this list as the basis for much of its global, regional and national priority-setting work, including, for example, the assessment of all birds for the IUCN Red List, and the identification of Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs). However, some national BirdLife Partners may use other checklists and taxonomic sources.  
  
**Download an Excel version of the current list**[**here**](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/Handbook%20of%20the%20Birds%20of%20the%20World%20and%20BirdLife%20International%20Digital%20Checklist%20of%20the%20Birds%20of%20the%20World_Version_8.xlsx)**.**  
  
**Download a PDF version of the current list**[**here**](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/Handbook%20of%20the%20Birds%20of%20the%20World%20and%20BirdLife%20International%20Digital%20Checklist%20of%20the%20Birds%20of%20the%20World_Version_8.pdf)**.**  
  
The Excel version of the Checklist includes the scientific and common English names used, the authority (for the original description of the taxon), the latest global [IUCN Red List category](http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/spcredcat) (e.g. Extinct, Vulnerable, Least Concern, etc.), and a record ID number unique to the taxonomic entity. In addition, the zipped file contains an Excel file listing taxonomic and status changes in the current version. There is also a separate Word copy of this taxonomic approach document, a simplified Excel list of species without subspecies and a version of the checklist with full taxonomic notes. The pdf version is the static version of the current Checklist. Earlier versions are available to download using the links below.  
  
Further details on the Checklist, and the rationale on which it is based, are given in the Introductions to the two published volumes of the *HBW and BirdLife International Illustrated Checklist of the Birds of the World*:  
  
[Introduction to Volume 1: Non-passerines](http://www.hbw.com/sites/default/files/news/2017/Illustrated_Checklist_Vol1-Introduction.pdf)  
[Introduction to Volume 2: Passerines](http://www.hbw.com/sites/default/files/news/2017/Illustrated_Checklist_Vol2-Introduction.pdf)  
  
The details and results of the acoustic analyses undertaken to support many of the decisions made in the Illustrated Checklist can be downloaded [here](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/2._Acoustic_data.zip), and the morphometric measurements taken from hundreds of museum specimens can be downloaded [here](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/3._Morphometric_data.zip).  
  
**Maintaining and updating the BirdLife taxonomic list**  
  
The BirdLife Taxonomic Working Group (BTWG) makes decisions on revisions to the Checklist, based on recent taxonomic research and where necessary the use of systematic criteria by which species rank can be consistently assessed ([Tobias *et al*. 2010](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1474-919X.2010.01051.x)). These criteria weight morphological and acoustic differences between taxa and have been found to perform strongly when compared to other taxonomic approaches ([Tobias *et al*. 2021](https://academic.oup.com/auk/article/138/2/ukab016/6218842)).  
  
BirdLife International is the IUCN Red List Authority for birds, so the list of species recognised by BirdLife forms the list of bird species in the IUCN Red List. BirdLife’s taxonomic list is also followed by a number of international conservation agreements, such as the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and the EU Birds Directive. BirdLife therefore has an international obligation to maintain an up-to-date list and to communicate it.  
  
The HBW/BirdLife checklist formed the taxonomic underpinning of HBW Alive, which has since been integrated into Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s [*Birds of the World*](https://birdsoftheworld.org/bow/home) platform. Because Cornell uses a different taxonomy to that used by BirdLife, the list of species displayed in Birds of the World does not exactly match the current BirdLife list. BirdLife and Cornell are currently working with others through the [Working Group on Avian Checklists (WGAC)](https://www.internationalornithology.org/working-group-avian-checklists), set up under the auspices of the International Ornithologists’ Union (IOU), to produce a unified checklist of the birds of the world. In future, we hope that the species displayed in Birds of the World (and used in [eBird](https://ebird.org/home)) will match those on the BirdLife Data Zone and the IUCN Red List. However, this process will take some time. BirdLife will continue to update its checklist on an annual basis, reflecting both the discovery of new species and, more frequently, changes to existing species limits based on the latest research. We will seek to do so in a way that aligns our taxonomy more closely with other checklists through the WGAC process, and will continue to provide full justification for the changes adopted, to ensure transparency.  
  
Once revisions to the current treatment are adopted, there is a necessary time-lag before revised taxa are assessed against the IUCN Red List Criteria and subsequently published on the BirdLife Data Zone and IUCN Red List websites, and included in new versions of the Checklist, which are typically released at the end of each year. Our taxonomic decision-making therefore runs ahead of our capacity to implement those decisions, so to help users see which taxonomic decisions have been made by the BTWG but not yet implemented, we maintain a list of forthcoming taxonomic changes [here](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/List_of_forthcoming_changes_to_BirdLife_checklist_2023-12-11.xlsx).  
  
We welcome input to the taxonomic work undertaken, and anyone can propose taxonomic issues or provide new information for consideration by the BirdLife Taxonomic Working Group by emailing: taxonomy@birdlife.org

**Archive of earlier versions of the Checklist**

Prior to the publication of the first volume of the HBW/BirdLife Checklist (for Non-passerines) in 2014 and the second volume (for Passerines) in 2016, BirdLife published an annually updated taxonomic checklist based on the taxonomies followed in a number of regional lists.

* [Version 0.0 (2007)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_0.zip)
* [Version 1.0 (2008)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_1.zip)
* [Version 2.0 (2009)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_2.zip)
* [Version 3.0 (2010)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_3.zip)
* [Version 4.0 (2011)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_4.zip)
* [Version 5.0 (June 2012)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_50.zip)
* [Version 5.1 (October 2012)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_51.zip)
* [Version 6 (November 2013)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_6.zip)
* [Version 6.1 (February 2014)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_61.zip)
* [Version 7 (July 2014)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_70.zip)
* [Version 8 (October 2015)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_80.zip)
* [Version 9 (December 2016)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_90.zip)
* [Version 9.1 (June 2017)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/BirdLife_Checklist_Version_91.zip)
* [HBW-BirdLife Version 2.0 (December 2017)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/HBW-BirdLife_Checklist_v2%20Dec17.zip)
* [HBW-BirdLife Version 3.0 (November 2018)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/HBW-BirdLife_Checklist_v3_Nov18.zip)
* [HBW-BirdLife Version 4.0 (December 2019)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/HBW-BirdLife_Checklist_v4_Dec19.zip)
* [HBW-BirdLife Version 5.0 (December 2020)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/HBW-BirdLife_Checklist_v5_Dec20.zip)
* [HBW-BirdLife Version 6.0 (December 2021)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/HBW-BirdLife_Checklist_v6_Dec21.zip)
* [HBW-BirdLife Version 6.0b (July 2022)](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/HBW-BirdLife_Checklist_v6b_Jul22.zip)
* [HBW-BirdLife Version 7.0 (December 2022) - with subspecies](http://datazone.birdlife.org/userfiles/file/Species/Taxonomy/HBW-BirdLife_Checklist_v7_Dec22.zip)