

Tetraogallus caucasicus -- (Pallas, 1811)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- GALLIFORMES -- PHASIANIDAE

Common names: Caucasian Snowcock;

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: Not Applicable (NA)

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 Europe.

The bird is not recorded from the EU27 region.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Azerbaijan; Georgia; Russian Federation

Population

The European population is estimated at 3,300-13,500 pairs, which equates to 6,700-27,100 mature individuals. The species does not occur in the EU27. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Trend

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

Habitats and Ecology

The species is endemic to the Caucasus where it is found in the Alpine and sub-Alpine zones of the High Caucasus and neighbouring mountain ranges. Birds use mountain slopes with rocky outcrops, alpine meadows, clumps of bushes and patches of melting snow (Tucker and Heath 1994) but avoid forest, scrub and large areas of snow cover (McGowan 1994). It is generally found at altitudes of 2,300 to 4,000 m (Tucker and Heath 1994) and occasionally from 1,800 m. The start of courtship can vary between years but usually takes place from early April. Laying occurs between late April and July with five to eight eggs laid. It nests in the open or under rock overhangs. Birds feed mainly on plant material including leaves, fruits, stems and tubers. Their diet changes over the year depending on availability of the different plant parts; feeding on dry material in autumn and winter and shoots and other materials when available (McGowan 1994). Birds perform seasonal altitudinal migrations moving to lower altitudes to overwinter (Tucker and Heath 1994) and higher altitudes post-breeding (McGowan 1994).

Habitats & Altitude

Habitat (level 1 - level 2)	Importance	Occurrence
Grassland - Temperate	suitable	resident

Habitats & Altitude			
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)		major	resident
Altitude	1800-4000 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

The only known threat is from habitat degradation caused by overgrazing by domestic stock (McGowan 1994).

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Small-holder grazing, ranching or farming	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

Mace Lande: Safe. The species was included on USSR Red List in 1978. In Turkey, it occurs only in Artvin and hunting has been banned. It is also found in at least three protected areas, the Tebezdinsky Reserve in Russia, the Zakataly Reserve in Azerbaijan and the Lagodechy Reserve in Georgia. The species also occurs in Caucasus Endemic Bird Area (McGowan 1994).

Conservation Actions Proposed

Important areas should be identified and protected from over grazing. Population monitoring and species research should be undertaken to inform future conservation research.

Bibliography

McGowan, P.J.K. 1994. Caucasian Snowcock (*Tetraogallus caucasicus*). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Sargatal, J., Christie, D.A. & de Juana, E. (eds.) 2013. *Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from <http://www.hbw.com/node/53372> on 29 September 2014).

Tucker, G.M. and Heath, M.F. 1994. *Birds in Europe: their conservation status*. BirdLife Conservation Series no. 3, BirdLife International, Cambridge.

Map (see overleaf)

European Regional Assessment



Tetraogallus caucasicus



Range

■ Extant (resident)

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

Map created 05/13/2015



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