

Pterocles orientalis -- (Linnaeus, 1758)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- PTEROCLIFORMES -- PTEROCLIDAE

Common names: Black-bellied Sandgrouse;

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status

EN -- Endangered, (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: Endangered (EN)

EU27 regional assessment: Endangered (EN)

In Europe this sandgrouse is undergoing very rapid population declines in the two main range states, Turkey and Spain, and it is therefore classified as Endangered (A2abcd+3bcd+4abcd).

Within the EU27 declines are also very rapid and the regional classification is also Endangered (A2abcd+3bcd+4abcd).

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Azerbaijan; Cyprus; Portugal; Russian Federation; Spain; Turkey

Vagrant:

Belgium; Germany; Greece; Malta

Population

The European population is estimated at 10,400-19,100 pairs, which equates to 20,800-38,200 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 5,000-8,300 pairs, which equates to 12,800-20,800 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 50-79% in 16.8 years (three generations). For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Habitats and Ecology

The species inhabits dry grassland steppe (Tucker & Heath 1994). It favours open, treeless steppes or pseudo-steppes which incorporate uncultivated areas, fallow land and arable stubbles (Cramp 1985). It tolerates occasional shrubs or trees and occupies foothills and upland plateaux (de Juana and Boesman 2013). It lays between March and August with timing dependent on latitude, generally laying in April in the Canary Islands and mostly June in Spain and the former USSR with replacement clutches until September (de Juana and Boesman 2013). It normally lays three eggs (de Juana and Boesman 2013). The nest is an uncovered, bare scrape in bare, stony areas such as those found on the edges of ploughed fields (Tucker and Heath 1994). It often feeds on small or very small seeds apparently preferring Leguminosae, as well as cereal grain and cultivated legumes (de Juana and Boesman 2013). It is sedentary in Iberia and nomadic or partially migratory in Turkey (de Juana and Boesman 2013).

Habitats & Altitude		
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)	Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land	suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land	suitable	non-breeding

Habitats & Altitude		
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)	Importance	Occurrence
Grassland - Temperate	suitable	breeding
Grassland - Temperate	suitable	non-breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation	suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation	suitable	non-breeding
Altitude	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

The main threat to this species is the intensification of agriculture. Ploughing of pasture and irrigation have reduced available habitat while the removal of marginal areas of semi-natural vegetation and the increased application of agro-chemicals has reduced food availability and these practices have probably been responsible for the extinctions in some areas. On the remaining grasslands, overgrazing affects the vegetation composition and structure, reducing both food availability and cover for nesting. Conversely, land abandonment is also a major threat, as the open, treeless steppe habitat is quickly lost when grazing is removed. Hunting, which is legal in Turkey during the breeding season, may be a problem; the species's habit of concentrating in large numbers at traditional drinking sites throughout the year means that it forms an attractive and relatively easy target (Tucker and Heath 1994).

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
		Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry farming	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Livestock farming & ranching (scale unknown/unrecorded)	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (intentional use - species is the target)	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Natural system modifications	Other ecosystem modifications	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Pollution	Herbicides and pesticides	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation; Species mortality			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

EU Birds Directive Annex I. Bern Convention Appendix II. Several EU LIFE programmes have focused on its steppe habitat and the species occurs in some SPAs in Spain. It is listed in the Spanish Red Book as 'vulnerable' (Madroño et al. 2004).

Conservation Actions Proposed

Suitable habitats should be maintained through the continuation of long-established, low-intensity farming systems. These can be maintained through agri-environment schemes. In addition restrictions on grazing rates and the use of herbicides should be implemented and the maintenance of fallow land should be encouraged (Tucker and Heath 1994).

- Cramp, S. ed. 1985. *The birds of the western Palearctic*, 4. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- de Juana, E. and Boesman, P. 2013. Black-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles orientalis*). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Sargatal, J., Christie, D.A. and de Juana, E. (eds.) 2013. *Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from <http://www.hbw.com/node/54087> on 27 April 2015).
- Madroño, A., González, C. and Atienza, J.C., eds. 2004. *Libro Rojo de las aves de España [Red Book of the birds of Spain]*. Madrid, Spain: Dirección General para la Biodiversidad and SEO/BirdLife
- Tucker, G.M. and Heath, M.F. 1994. *Birds in Europe: their conservation status*. BirdLife Conservation Series no. 3, BirdLife International, Cambridge.
- Hagemeijer, W.J.M. and Blair, M.J. 1997. *The EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Birds: Their Distribution and Abundance*. T & A D Poyser, London.

European Regional Assessment



Pterocles orientalis

Range

- Extant (breeding)
- Extant (non breeding)
- Extant (resident)

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

NE DD LC NT VU **EN** CR EW EX
ENDANGERED

Map created 05/12/2015



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply any official endorsement, acceptance or opinion by IUCN.