Turdoides altirostris -- (Hartert, 1909)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- PASSERIFORMES -- TIMALIIDAE

Common names: Iraq Babbler;

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status
NT -- Near Threatened, (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: Near Threatened (NT°°)
EU27 regional assessment: Not Applicable (NA)

This species has a large global range in Iran, Iraq and Syria which just extends into southeastern-most Europe in Turkey-in-Asia. The population size within the region is very small but the population trend is increasing. The species therefore meets the thresholds for classification as Endangered, but given the large, apparently increasing neighbouring population there is significant potential for rescue from outside the region and the final category is downlisted two categories to Near Threatened (NT°°).

The species does not occur within the EU27.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Turkey

Population

The European population is estimated at 50-100 pairs, which equates to 100-200 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 increasing. For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Habitats and Ecology

This species occurs in the reedbeds of the Mesopotamian marshes, and is also found in rural habitats along rivers and irrigation canals (Stattersfield et al. 1998). It prefers dense reedbeds, palm groves, date gardens and poplar trees (Populus euphratica) lining waterways, adjacent cultivated fields and thickets. In Europe, it breeds from May and is monogamous, with occasional cooperative breeding. The nest is a rather untidy deep cup of stems, lined with grass, dead leaves, rootlets, fibres, reeds and feathers. It is set in a leaf-sheltered fork of a tree (poplar, tamarisk) or in reeds. Clutches are three or four eggs. It feeds on invertebrates, mostly insects and spiders (Araneae). The species is resident (Collar and Robson 2007).

Habitats & Altitude

Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Aquatic - Canals and Drainage Channels, Ditches		suitable	resident
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land		suitable	resident
Artificial/Terrestrial - Plantations		suitable	resident
Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands		suitable	resident
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Rivers/Streams/Creeks (includes waterfalls)		suitable	resident
Altitude		Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

There has been considerable loss of wetlands within its range due to large-scale projects for flood control, drainage and irrigation (Maltby 1994). The increase in settlement and improvement in access has resulted in further disturbance, with levels of pollution increasing substantially through the use of insecticides (Stattersfield et al. 1998).

Threats & Impacts

Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Human intrusions & disturbance	Work & other activities	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species disturbance			
Natural system modifications	Abstraction of surface water (unknown use)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Natural system modifications	Other ecosystem modifications	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	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			
Residential & commercial development	Housing & urban areas	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

There are currently no known conservation measures for this species.

Conservation Actions Proposed

This species would likely benefit from the protection and preservation of its marshland habitat, including the restriction of access to important areas. In addition a ban on the widespread use of insecticides would assist recovery.

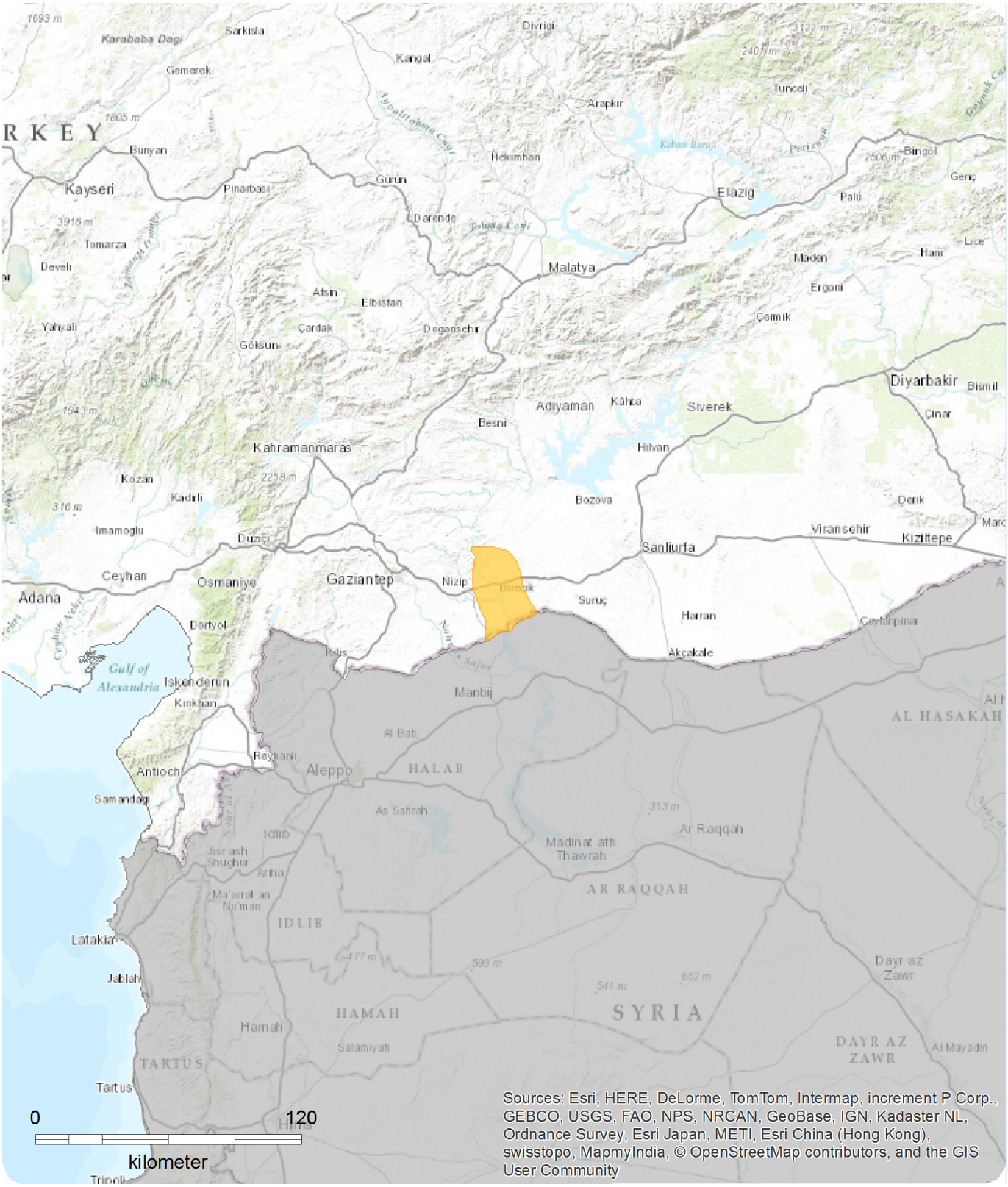
Bibliography

Collar, N. and Robson, C. 2007. Iraq Babbler (*Turdoides altirostris*). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Sargatal, J., Christie, D.A. and de Juana, E. (eds.) 2014. *Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from http://www.hbw.com/node/59545 on 1 April 2015).

Maltby, E. 1994. *An environmental and ecological study of the marshlands of Mesopotamia*. AMAR Appeal Trust, Exeter, U.K.

Stattersfield, A.J., Crosby, M.J., Long, A.J. and Wege, D.C. 1998. *Endemic bird areas of the world: priorities for bird conservation*. BirdLife International, Cambridge, U.K.

Map (see overleaf)



Turdoides altirostris

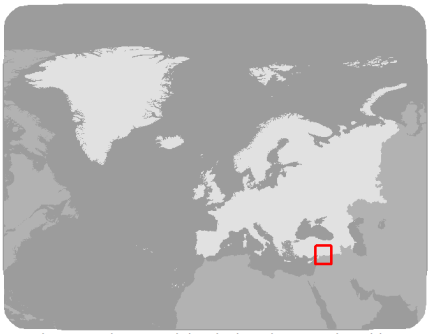
NE | DD | LC | **NT** NEAR THREATENED | VU | EN | CR | EW | EX

Range

Extant (resident)

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

Map created 05/13/2015



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