Chersophilus duponti -- (Vieillot, 1820)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- PASSERIFORMES -- ALAUDIDAE

Common names: Dupont's Lark;

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status
VU -- Vulnerable, (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: Vulnerable (VU)
EU27 regional assessment: Vulnerable (VU)

In Europe this species is restricted to Spain, where has a small, declining population. It is therefore classified as Vulnerable (C1) in both Europe and the EU27.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Spain

Vagrant:

Cyprus; France; Greece; Italy; Malta; Portugal

Population

The European population is estimated at 2,200-2,700 pairs, which equates to 4,400-5,400 mature individuals. The entire population is found in the EU27. For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Trend

In Europe and the EU27 the population size is estimated to be decreasing by at least 10% in 10 years. For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Habitats and Ecology

This species prefers open plains with shrub-steppe or feather-grass (Stipa) steppe, on flat or rolling terrain. In Spain it prefers land with shrubs, mainly 40–60 cm tall, and medium-high percentage of bare ground. It also occurs in cereal fields outside the breeding season. It is found between 50–1,550 m, but mostly at 1,000–1,400 m. Breeding takes place in March and July and pairs will often have more than one brood. Song-flighting males often rise to considerable height (100–150 m) and remain aloft, singing continuously, for 30 minutes or more before suddenly descending rapidly and vertically to the ground; wing-clapping has been recorded during song flights at lower levels. The nest is a scrape on ground, beside a small shrub or tuft or in the open, lined with twigs, vegetable fibres and hair, orientation mainly in NE-NW quarter. Clutch size three to five eggs in Spain (de Juana and Suárez 2004). The species feeds principally on insects (beetles and Lepidoptera larvae) and seeds. The chicks are fed only on invertebrates, predominantly Lepidoptera larvae, grasshoppers (Acrididae) and spiders (Tucker and Heath 1994). This species is sedentary although probably irregular movements occur during winter. In Spain, it has been observed in winter flocks with other lark species. Vagrants recorded east and north in Italy, Malta, Greece (Crete) and Cyprus (de Juana and Suárez 2004).

Habitats & Altitude

Habitat (level 1 - level 2)	Importance	Occurrence
Grassland - Temperate	major	resident
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation	suitable	resident

Habitats & Altitude

Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Shrubland - Temperate		suitable	resident
Altitude	50-1550 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

In parts of its range, overgrazing or undergrazing and agricultural development have caused a reduction in its preferred habitats and a considerable decrease in numbers (M. Smart in litt. 2004, Isenmann et al. 2005). Reforestation schemes also lead to a loss of suitable habitat and infrastructure development has led to fragmentation of habitat, particularly by the construction and development of windfarms in Spain. The limited dispersal capabilities of the species reduces the exchange of individuals between populations and increases their extinction risk. Since gene flow between Iberian and African populations is extremely low (García et al. 2008) it is important that conservation plans for Iberian populations do not rely on the existence of the African populations of the same subspecies. A recent Spanish study has shown that the species's occurrence is principally determined by geographic isolation (extinction events were exclusively related to isolation), landscape matrix and patch size, rather than habitat quality (Vögeli et al. 2010). Isolation of local populations and reduced patch size has a compounding effect on population density since smaller populations suffer reduced singing repertoires which in turn reduces the rescuing effect from others (receiving immigrants), thus compromising population persistence (Laiolo and Tella 2008).

Threats & Impacts

Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry plantations	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Annual & perennial non-timber crops (scale unknown/ unrecorded)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Livestock farming & ranching (scale unknown/ unrecorded)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Energy production & mining	Renewable energy	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

EU Birds Directive Annex I. Bern Convention Appendix II. An EU Species Action Plan was published in 2008 (Inigo et al. 2008). The species has been studied in Spain and is included as Endangered in the Spanish Red Data Book.

Conservation Actions Proposed

Continue monitoring Spanish populations. Determine appropriate levels of grazing to maintain habitat. Work with farmers and pastoralists to ensure that levels of grazing benefit the species.

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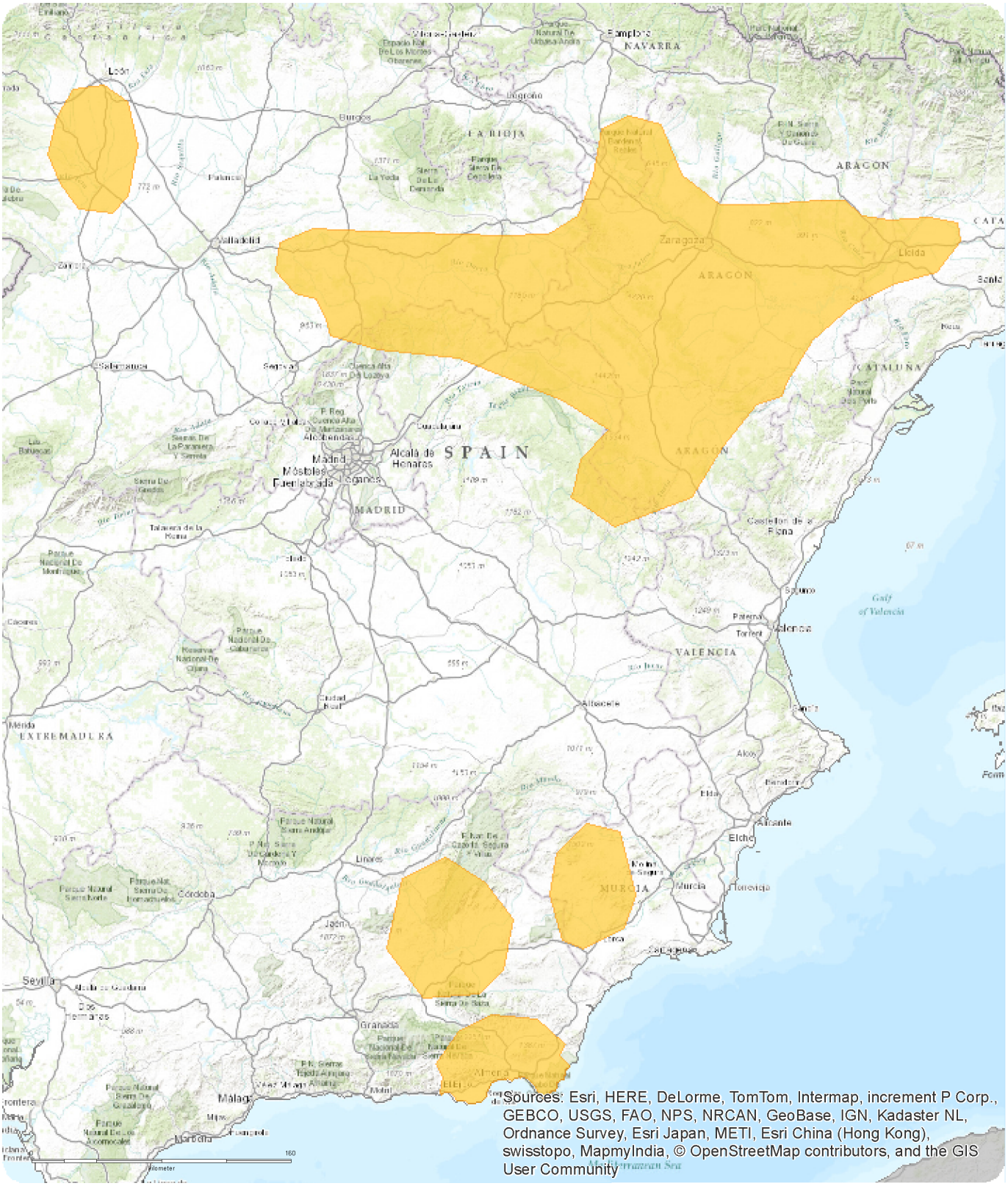
Map (see overleaf)



Chersophilus duponti

NE | DD | LC | NT | VU VULNERABLE | EN | CR | EW | EX

Range

Extant (resident)

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

Map created 05/12/2015

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