

# **Chlamydotis macqueenii -- (J.E. Gray, 1832)**

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- OTIDIFORMES -- OTIDIDAE

**Common names:** Asian Houbara; Asian Houbara Bustard; Macqueen's Bustard

## **European Red List Assessment**

### **European Red List Status**

CR -- Critically 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: Critically Endangered (CR)**

**EU27 regional assessment: Not Applicable (NA)**

This species has declined to the point of possible extinction as a breeder within the European region. Any remaining population must be tiny and is inferred to still be declining. It is therefore classified as Critically Endangered (Possibly Extinct) in Europe.

The bird is considered vagrant in the EU27 and is assessed as Not Applicable (NA) for this region.

## **Occurrence**

### **Countries/Territories of Occurrence**

#### **Native:**

Turkey

#### **Vagrant:**

Austria; Belgium; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Italy; Latvia; Netherlands; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia; Sweden; Switzerland; Ukraine; United Kingdom

## **Population**

The European population is estimated at 0-10 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 decreasing. For details of national estimates, see

[Supplementary PDF](#).

## **Habitats and Ecology**

This species inhabits open, arid and sparsely vegetated steppe and semi-desert (Launay et al. 1997, Osborne et al. 1997, Mian 2003, Yang et al. 2003). It favours scattered shrubby vegetation, typically comprising xerophytic or halophytic plants (del Hoyo et al. 2014). On the breeding grounds, nesting females may also favour sites away from vegetation patches, which could provide cover for predators (Yang et al. 2003, Aghanajafizadeh et al. 2012).

Outside of Europe, in Syria, the species breeds mainly from March to May (del Hoyo et al. 2014). Males attract their mates with an extravagant courtship display which they perform at the same site each year. The display begins with a period of strutting and culminates with the male retracting his head within an ornamental shield of erected neck feathers and then running at speed in either a straight or curved line. The display is often accompanied by a series of subsonic booming calls (Gaucher et al. 1996). Females create a shallow scrape in the ground in which they typically lay two to three eggs (del Hoyo et al. 2014). The species feeds throughout the day, but is most active at dawn and dusk (Combreau and Launay 1996). It has an eclectic diet, mainly comprising plants and invertebrates (especially ants Formicidae and beetles Tenebrionidae (Tigar and Osborne 2000)), but also including vertebrates such as rodents, lizards, small snakes and even young

birds (del Hoyo et al. 2014, Tourenq et al. 2003).

<b>Habitats &amp; Altitude</b>			
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Terrestrial - Pastureland		suitable	non-breeding
Grassland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry		major	breeding
Grassland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry		major	non-breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		suitable	non-breeding
Altitude		Occasional altitudinal limits	

### Threats

The principal threat is from hunting (primarily using falconry), largely but not exclusively on the species's wintering grounds (Judas et al. 2009). In parts of the region, fast-paced development related to the growth of the petroleum industry has reduced the availability of undisturbed habitats and further exacerbated the species's decline. Oil exploration, road building, oil and water pipelines, mining and quarrying activities, powerlines and the general disturbance caused by four-wheel drive vehicles have all been identified as significant auxiliary threats. Powerlines in particular may prove to be a major threat in the near future. Livestock grazing is reported to have a negative impact on the species, both indirectly, by degrading the desert vegetation on which birds rely for food and concealment, and directly, through the trampling of nests and disturbance of nesting females (Lavee 1988).

<b>Threats &amp; Impacts</b>					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry grazing, ranching or farming	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation					
Agriculture & aquaculture	Nomadic grazing	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem degradation					
Agriculture & aquaculture	Small-holder grazing, ranching or farming	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation					
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (intentional use - species is the target)	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Very Rapid Declines	High Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Species mortality; Species disturbance; Reduced reproductive success					
Climate change & severe weather	Habitat shifting & alteration	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Future	Majority (50-90%)	Causing/Could cause fluctuations	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation					
Energy production & mining	Mining & quarrying	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation					
Energy production & mining	Oil & gas drilling	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation; Species disturbance					
Human intrusions & disturbance	Recreational activities	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Species disturbance					

<b>Threats &amp; Impacts</b>					
<b>Threat (level 1)</b>	<b>Threat (level 2)</b>	<b>Impact and Stresses</b>			
Human intrusions & disturbance	Work & other activities	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Species disturbance					
Pollution	Oil spills	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Future	Minority (<50%)	Unknown	Unknown
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation; Species mortality					
Residential & commercial development	Commercial & industrial areas	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation					
Residential & commercial development	Housing & urban areas	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation					
Residential & commercial development	Tourism & recreation areas	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation					
Transportation & service corridors	Roads & railroads	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation					
Transportation & service corridors	Utility & service lines	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation; Species mortality; Species disturbance					

## **Conservation**

### **Conservation Actions Underway**

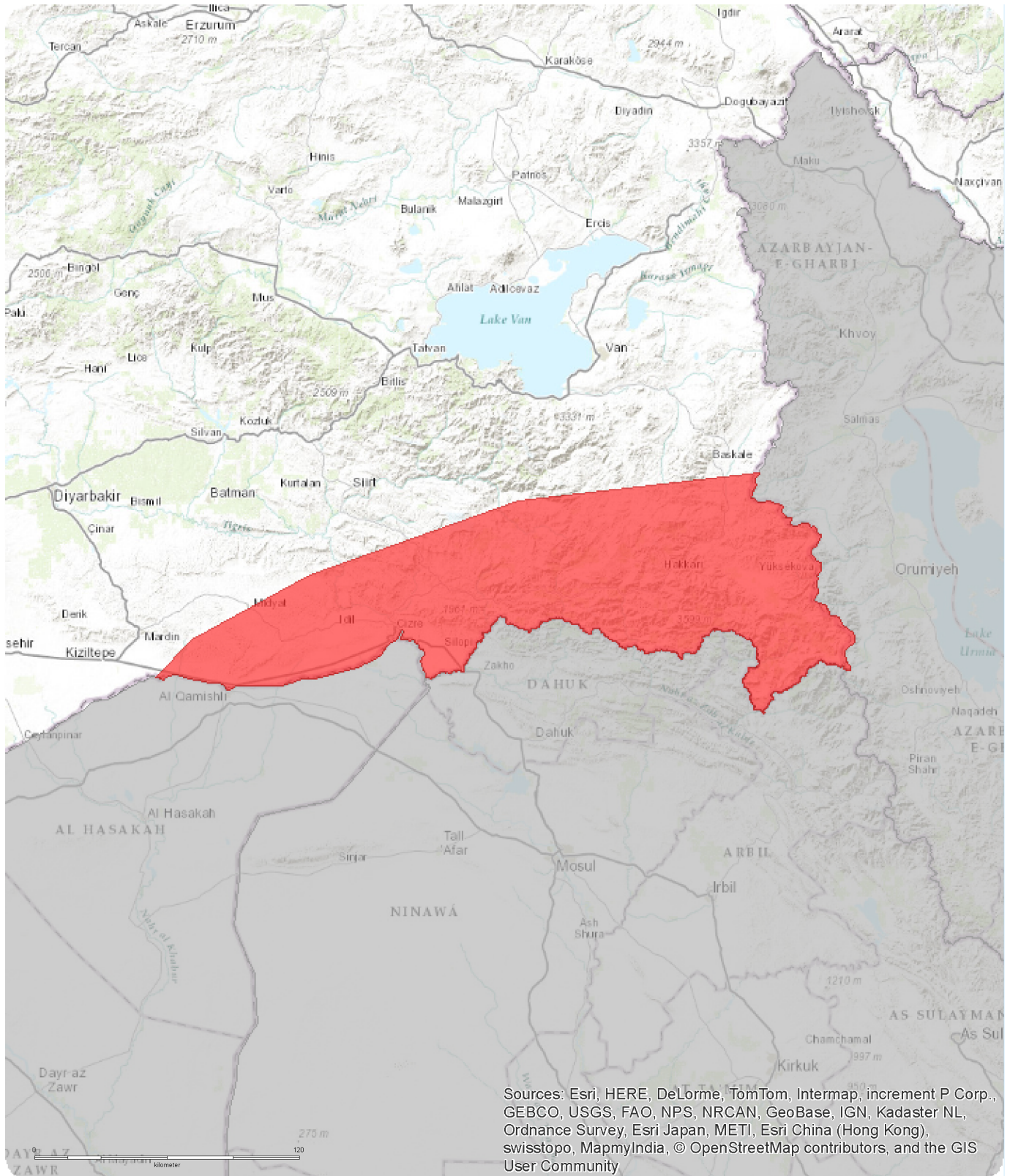
CITES Appendix I. CMS Appendix II. Studies have been conducted into the status, ecology and migration of the species in various parts of its range, most notably Kazakhstan (Combreau et al. 2001, 2002, Tourenq et al. 2004, O. Combreau and M. Lawrence in litt. 2004, F. Launay pers. comm. 2004, Riou et al. 2011). Through its network of breeding facilities in the U.A.E., Morocco and Kazakhstan, the International Fund for Houbara Conservation (IFHC) has a long-term goal to produce 35,000 Asian Houbaras each year for reintroduction into the wild (IFHC 2014). The first releases were made in Mahazat as-Sayd Protected Area in central Saudi Arabia in 1991. This population is currently estimated to number 250-300 individuals. Further releases have taken place elsewhere in Saudi Arabia and also in U.A.E., Qatar, Kuwait, Yemen, Jordan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. It is not yet clear what impact the releases of captive-reared birds have on the demographics and genetic integrity of the overall population.

### **Conservation Actions Proposed**

The most urgently needed conservation measures are those that will reduce exploitation to a biologically sustainable level. This will require precautionary and scientifically determined limits on the number of birds that can be harvested legally and stricter enforcement of bans on illegal forms of trade and hunting; it also requires in-depth studies of natural productivity in Asian Houbaras in relation to habitat selection and predator abundance. Carry out further surveys to gain an improved estimate of the overall population size and trend; continue research to determine the migration routes, schedules and strategies of all populations. Produce a range-wide action and recovery plan, based on agreement under the Convention on Migratory Species. Create managed protected areas. Where they can be shown to be detrimental, reduce grazing and other farming pressures (Goriup 1997, Combreau et al. 2001, O. Combreau and M. Lawrence in litt. 2004, F. Launay pers. comm. 2004). Establish long-term, range-wide population monitoring studies. Study the overall demographic and genetic consequences of releasing captive-reared birds.

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# European Regional Assessment



## *Chlamydotis macqueenii*

### Range

■ Possibly Extinct

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

NE DD LC NT VU EN **< CR >** EW EX



Map created 05/12/2015



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