

Cursorius cursor -- (Latham, 1787)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- CHARADRIIFORMES -- GLAREOLIDAE

Common names: Cream-coloured Courser;

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status

NT -- Near Threatened, (IUCN version 3.1)

Assessment Information

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Assessment Rationale

European regional assessment: Near Threatened (NT)

EU27 regional assessment: Near Threatened (NT)

Within Europe this species is primarily restricted to the eastern Canary Islands (Spain), with small numbers also in Turkey. The total population at both European and EU27 scales is moderately small and approaches the thresholds for classification as Vulnerable. There is not considered to be any potential rescue effect from neighbouring populations, therefore the final category is unchanged and the species is classified as Near Threatened (D1) in both Europe and the EU27.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Greece; Hungary; Ireland, Rep. of; Malta; Spain; Turkey

Vagrant:

Austria; Belgium; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Finland; France; Germany; Italy; Luxembourg; Montenegro; Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Sweden; Switzerland; United Kingdom

Population

The European population is estimated at 450-2,800 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 200-2,300 mature individuals. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Trend

In Europe and the EU27 the population size trend is unknown. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Habitats and Ecology

The species lives in semi-desert, sandy-rocky plains and sand-dunes, preferring areas with a sparse cover of herbaceous vegetation or low shrubs (Tucker and Heath 1994). Typically these habitats are dominated by *Frankenia* spp., *Salsola vermiculata*, *Launaea arborescens* and *Lycium intricatum*, together with *Atriplex glauca*, *Aizoon canariense* and annual grasses (Tucker and Heath 1994). On Tenerife during the winter it occurs on sandy plains with a sparse vegetation cover of *Frankenia laevis*, *Polycarpha nivea*, *Heliotropium ramossissimum* and *Launaea arborescens*; occasionally it has also been observed in fields of *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum* and *M. nodiflorum* (Tucker and Heath 1994). First eggs laid early February but mostly March to early April in the Canary Islands (Snow and Perrins 1998). The nest is a shallow unlined scrape on bare ground (MacLean 1996). Clutch size usually two eggs (MacLean 1996). It feeds mostly on adult and larval insects but also takes molluscs, isopods, arachnids and seeds (MacLean 1996). Its movements in the Canary Islands are poorly known (Martín and Lorenzo 2001 in Madroño et al. 2004). There may be two populations on Lanzarote, one resident the other migratory (Concepción 2000b in Madroño et al. 2004). The nominate race (Canary Islands population part of this race) makes extensive movements with much of the northern population crossing the Sahara for winter (MacLean 1996). However

birds are present on Tenerife during the winter (Tucker and Heath 1994). Birds from the bogulubovi race (including Turkish population) are mainly winter visitors to Pakistan and north-west India (MacLean 1996).

Habitats & Altitude			
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Grassland - Temperate		suitable	breeding
Grassland - Temperate		suitable	non-breeding
Other		suitable	non-breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Temperate		suitable	non-breeding
Altitude	max. 800 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

In the past, heavy egg-collecting pressure contributed to the species' rarity on the Canary Islands. Now the main threats are the destruction and alteration of habitat through development of tourist resorts and the building of new roads (Maclean 1996). In addition overgrazing may cause a problem through soil loss and desertification. Disturbance has increased as a result of an increase in off-road tourist vehicles and military manoeuvres (Gonzalez 1999). There is a need for site protection and this would also benefit the endemic race of Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata fuertaventurae*) (Maclean 1996). Other potential threats include collision with powerlines, introduced mammals and illegal hunting (Gonzalez 1999).

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
		Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
Agriculture & aquaculture	Livestock farming & ranching (scale unknown/unrecorded)	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (intentional use - species is the target)	Past, Unlikely to Return	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Past Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Human intrusions & disturbance	Recreational activities	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Species disturbance			
Human intrusions & disturbance	War, civil unrest & military exercises	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Species disturbance			
Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases	Unspecified species	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Residential & commercial development	Tourism & recreation areas	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Medium Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Transportation & service corridors	Utility & service lines	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

The species is categorised as Endangered on the Spanish Red List. It is also listed in the National Catalogue

of Threatened Species in the category Sensitive to Habitat Alteration. Annex I of the Birds Directive. Annex II of the Bern Convention. This species has benefited from conservation measures taken for the Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata fuertaventurae*), such as the designation of two SPAs (Jandía and Dunas de Corralejo e Isla de Lobos) in 1986. The Canary Island Countryside Act passed in 1986 and 1994 declared two areas, Corralejo and Jandía, as national parks to protect the species (Gonzalez 1999).

Conservation Actions Proposed

This species would benefit from the designation of SPAs that cover the best habitat areas and the creation of new protected areas to enlarge the network, as well as the implementation of management plans for the species in these areas. Areas in the eastern islands important to the species should be defined. In critical areas, avoid holding military manoeuvres and restrict and control vehicle movement. An awareness campaign of the restrictions should be implemented. In addition in these areas powerlines should be laid underground, grazing should be controlled and habitat alteration prevented. Regular monitoring and censuses of the population should take place and research programmes on the species should be set up (Gonzalez 1999).

Bibliography

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Map (see overleaf)

European Regional Assessment



Cursorius cursor

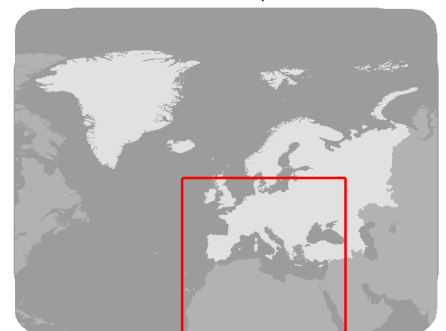
Range

- Extant (breeding)
- Extant (resident)
- Possibly Extinct

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

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

Map created 05/13/2015



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