

Streptopelia turtur -- (Linnaeus, 1758)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- COLUMBIFORMES -- COLUMBIDAE

Common names: European Turtle-dove; European Turtle Dove; Tourterelle des bois; Turtle Dove

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status

VU -- Vulnerable, (IUCN version 3.1)

Assessment Information

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Reviewer(s):	Symes, A.
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Assessment Rationale

European regional assessment: Vulnerable (VU)

EU27 regional assessment: Near Threatened (NT)

In Europe this numerous species is undergoing rapid population declines, and it is therefore classified as Vulnerable. Within the EU27 declines are moderately rapid and the regional classification here is Near Threatened.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Albania; Andorra; Armenia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Faroe Islands (to DK); Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland, Rep. of; Italy; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of; Malta; Moldova; Montenegro; Netherlands; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Gibraltar (to UK)

Vagrant:

Iceland; Norway; Svalbard and Jan Mayen (to NO)

Population

The European population is estimated at 3,150,000-5,940,000 pairs, which equates to 6,310,000-11,900,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 2,340,000-4,050,000 pairs, which equates to 4,670,000-8,110,000 mature individuals. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Trend

In Europe the population size is estimated to be decreasing by 30-49% in 15.9 years (three generations). In the EU27 the population size is estimated to be decreasing a rate approaching 30% in the same period. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

Habitats and Ecology

The species uses hedges, borders of forest, groves, spinneys, coppices, young tree plantations, scrubby wasteland, woody marshes, scrub and garigue, all with agricultural areas nearby for feeding (Tucker & Heath 1994). It uses a wide variety of woodland types. It tolerates humans but does not breed close to towns or villages (Baptista et al. 2013). It breeds at low altitudes not exceeding 500 m in the temperate zone and up to 1,000-1,300 m in Mediterranean areas (Tucker & Heath 1994). Breeding commences in May. It lays two eggs (Baptista et al. 2013). The nest is a small platform of twigs lined with plant material and placed in the lowest parts of trees (Tucker & Heath 1994) and in shrubs and hedges. It mainly feeds on the ground taking seeds and fruits of weeds and cereals, but also berries, fungi and invertebrates. It is strongly migratory (Baptista et al. 2013), wintering south of the Sahara from Senegal east to Eritrea and Ethiopia (Tucker & Heath 1994).

Habitats & Altitude			
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land		suitable	breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Rural Gardens		suitable	breeding
Forest - Boreal		suitable	breeding
Forest - Temperate		suitable	breeding
Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation		major	breeding
Shrubland - Temperate		major	breeding
Altitude	max. 1300 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

Transformation of agricultural land, including destruction of hedges, is thought to be an important factor in the decline of this species, also loss of semi-natural habitats. Changes in agriculture practices have several impacts on the species, as they can both reduce food supply and nesting habitat availability and it is likely that the decline in food is the main limiting factor rather than decline in nest site availability (Lutz 2006).

Widespread use of chemical herbicides appears to also be a very serious factor, with consequent decline or elimination of many food plants. Hunting is also significant, during migration and in winter quarters; with annual toll in France computed at 40,000 birds (Baptista et al. 2013). The species is also vulnerable to infection by the protozoan parasite *Trichomonas gallinae*, which causes mortality (Stockdale et al. 2014). Severe drought in the Sahel zone is thought to be a possible factor in the decline as well as competition with Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) (Lutz 2006).

Threats & Impacts					
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
		Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact
Agriculture & aquaculture	Agro-industry farming	Ongoing	Whole (>90%)	Rapid Declines	High Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (intentional use - species is the target)	Ongoing	Whole (>90%)	Rapid Declines	High Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (unintentional effects - species is not the target)	Ongoing	Whole (>90%)	Rapid Declines	High Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Climate change & severe weather	Droughts	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Climate change & severe weather	Temperature extremes	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Reduced reproductive success			
Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases	Eurasian Collared-dove (<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>)	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases	<i>Trichomonas gallinae</i>	Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Pollution	Herbicides and pesticides	Ongoing	Whole (>90%)	Rapid Declines	High Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation; Species mortality			

Conservation Actions Underway

CMS Appendix II. EU Birds Directive Annex II. In the UK, it is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

Conservation Actions Proposed

Breeding and staging habitats should be managed (Lutz 2006), ensuring the conservation and re-creation of hedges with hawthorn (*Crataegus*) which is a favoured tree for breeding and also the reduction in agricultural herbicides (Tucker and Heath 1994). Restrictions on hunting to avoid affecting late breeding birds and birds during spring migration should be introduced and enforced. Annual national bag statistics where hunting takes place must be collected in order to develop a level of hunting which is sustainable. Research and population monitoring should be continued (Lutz 2006).

Bibliography

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Map (see overleaf)

European Regional Assessment



Streptopelia turtur

Range

■ Extant (breeding)

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



Map created 05/12/2015

