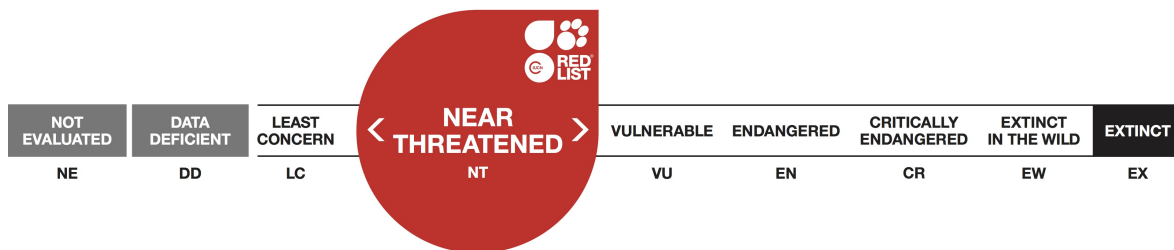


## *Emberiza cineracea*, Cinereous Bunting

Assessment by: BirdLife International



View on [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)

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## Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Aves	Passeriformes	Emberizidae

**Taxon Name:** *Emberiza cineracea* Brehm, 1855

### Regional Assessments:

- [Europe](#)

### Common Name(s):

- English: Cinereous Bunting
- French: Bruant cendré

### Taxonomic Source(s):

AERC TAC. 2003. AERC TAC Checklist of bird taxa occurring in Western Palearctic region, 15th Draft. Available at: [http://www.aerc.eu/DOCS/Bird\\_taxa\\_of\\_the\\_WP15.xls#](http://www.aerc.eu/DOCS/Bird_taxa_of_the_WP15.xls#).

## Assessment Information

**Red List Category & Criteria:** Near Threatened [ver 3.1](#)

**Year Published:** 2015

**Date Assessed:** October 1, 2015

### Justification:

This poorly known migratory species is classified as Near Threatened because its moderately small population is suspected to be declining as a result of the conversion and degradation of its habitats; it almost meets the requirements for listing as threatened under criterion C1. Improved information on its population size and trend may in due course lead to a reassessment of its status.

### Previously Published Red List Assessments

2012 – Near Threatened (NT) – <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2012-1.RLTS.T22720912A37839850.en>

2008 – Near Threatened (NT)

2004 – Near Threatened (NT)

2000 – Lower Risk/near threatened (LR/nt)

1994 – Lower Risk/near threatened (LR/nt)

1988 – Lower Risk/least concern (LR/lc)

## Geographic Range

### Range Description:

This species breeds on the islands of Skyros (Hölzinger 1995), Lesbos and Chios, **Greece** (105-205 pairs [BirdLife International 2015]), and western **Turkey** (race *cineracea*), as well as in south-east Turkey, south-west **Iran** (fewer than 100 pairs in the Zagros mountains; race *semenowi*) (Cramp and Perrins 1994, Byers *et al.* 1995) and **Iraq** (minimum 1,000 pairs in Iraqi Kurdistan [R. Porter *in litt.* 2015]). Statements regarding potential breeding in northern Syria are of uncertain validity (Albayrak *et al.* 2003). The winter distribution remains poorly known, but includes **Eritrea** and **Yemen**, and potentially also Ethiopia, north-east Sudan and south-west Saudi Arabia (where records may solely relate to individuals on migration) (Walther *et al.* 2004, Walther 2006). In addition, there are passage records along the species's two, well-separated migration routes: Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Palestinian Authority Territories and Egypt (predominantly race *cineracea*); and Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Oman (race *semenowi*). The Turkish breeding population - which at 3,100-5,500 pairs probably constitutes over 90% of the global population - was suspected to have declined by 0-19% during 1990-2000 (BirdLife International 2004) and in 1990-2013 (BirdLife International 2015).

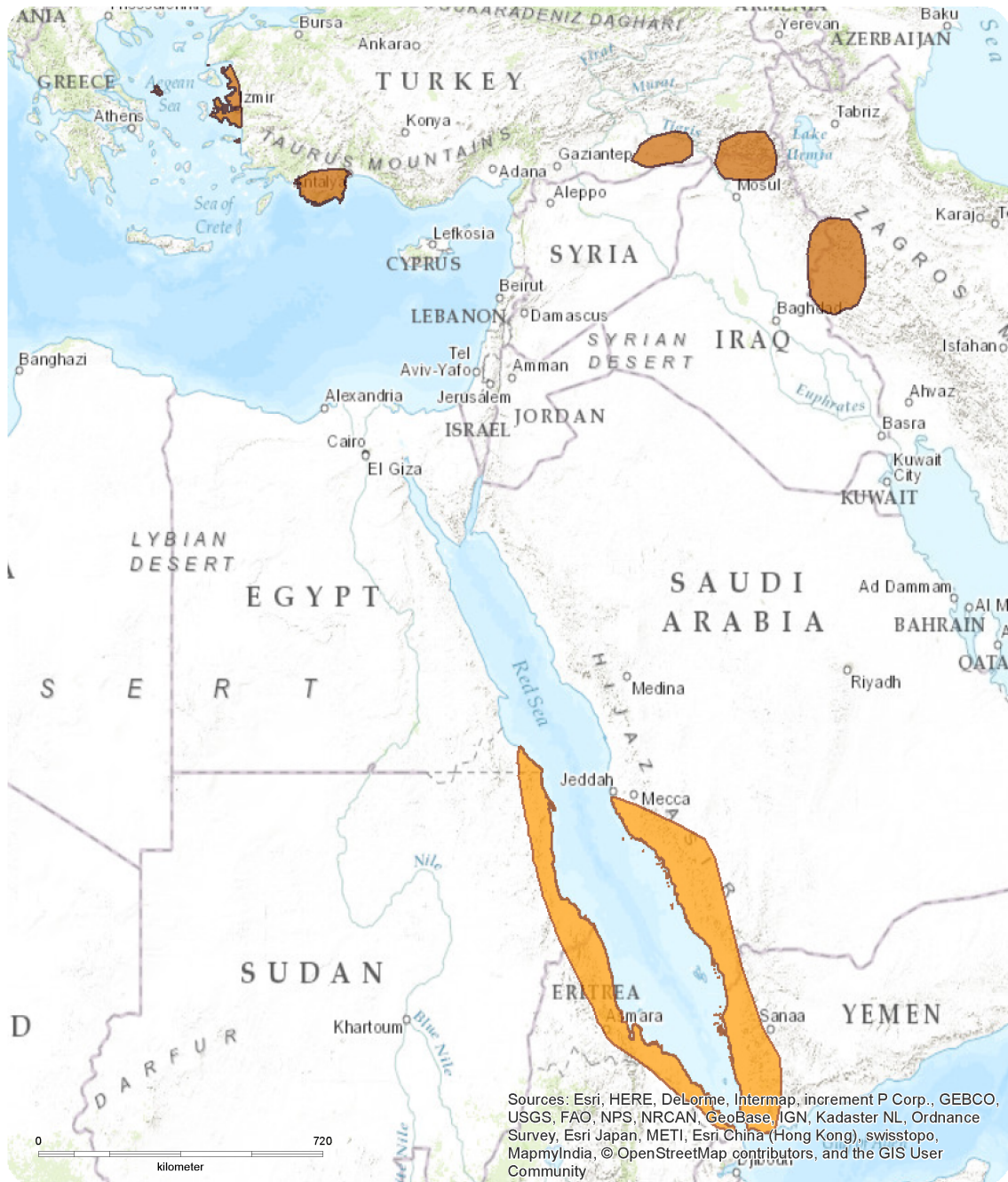
**Country Occurrence:**

**Native:** Bahrain; Cyprus; Egypt; Eritrea; Greece; Iran, Islamic Republic of; Iraq; Israel; Jordan; Kuwait; Lebanon; Palestinian Territory, Occupied; Qatar; Saudi Arabia; Sudan; Syrian Arab Republic; Turkey; United Arab Emirates; Yemen

**Vagrant:** Denmark; Norway; Oman; Tunisia; Uzbekistan

**Present - origin uncertain:** Ethiopia

# Distribution Map



## *Emberiza cineracea*

### Range

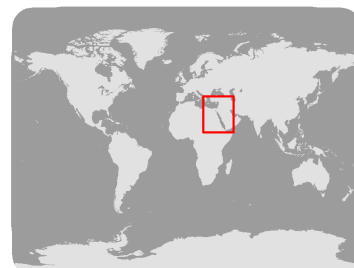
- Extant (breeding)
- Extant (non breeding)

### Compiled by:

BirdLife International and NatureServe (2014) Bird Species Distribution Maps of the World.

NE DD LC NT VU EN CR EW EX

NEAR THREATENED



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply any official endorsement, acceptance or opinion by IUCN.



## Population

The European population is estimated at 6,400-11,400 mature individuals (BirdLife International 2015) and there are thought to be less than 100 pairs in Iran and a minimum of 1,000 pairs in Iraq (R. Porter *in litt.* 2015). The global population is therefore estimated to number 8,600-13,600 mature individuals roughly equating to 12,900-20,400 individuals in total, here placed in the band 10,000-19,999 individuals.

### Trend Justification

A slow to moderate overall decline is suspected, based on reported declines in Turkey (which probably holds more than 90% of the global breeding population) of 1-19% during 1990-2013 (BirdLife International 2015).

**Current Population Trend:** Decreasing

## Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

The species breeds on dry rocky slopes and uplands with shrubby vegetation and sometimes conifers. It is migratory, wintering in dry open country with short grass, semi-desert, low rocky hills, bare cultivated land and dry scrub, often in coastal areas. Migrating birds are regularly recorded in lowland agricultural land and semi-deserts.

**Systems:** Terrestrial

## Threats (see Appendix for additional information)

Changes in grazing pressure by sheep and goats could affect the population size. High grazing pressure could result in the trampling of nests, whereas too little grazing could reduce the area of open feeding sites (Albayrak *et al.* 2003). Remaining habitat in western Turkey is being developed rapidly for tourism (Tucker and Heath 1994). Suitable habitats in south-east Turkey have been flooded by dam construction, resulting both in direct habitat loss and the relocation of displaced villagers to new, currently unpopulated areas (Albayrak *et al.* 2003). Construction of wind farms and mining in the species's habitats in Turkey are further threats (S. Isfendiyaroglu *in litt.* 2015).

## Conservation Actions (see Appendix for additional information)

### Conservation and Research Actions Underway

The species is legally protected under Greek and Turkish law (Albayrak *et al.* 2003). One of the breeding sites on Lesbos is partially protected as a Natural Monument and Wildlife Refuge (Albayrak *et al.* 2003). An international action plan was published in 2003 (Albayrak *et al.* 2003). The species's potential winter distribution has been modelled using GIS-based techniques (Walther *et al.* 2004). Surveys undertaken by Nature Iraq from 2005 to 2012 have revealed that Iraqi Kurdistan is an important area for the species with 23 of 53 potential Key Biodiversity Areas surveyed containing breeding individuals (R. Porter *in litt.* 2015).

### Conservation and Research Actions Proposed

Survey suitable habitat within the putative wintering grounds (Walther *et al.* 2004; Walther 2006). Develop a Species Action Plan. Develop a monitoring programme to assess population trends. Assess threats to the species and develop appropriate responses.

## Credits

**Assessor(s):** BirdLife International

**Reviewer(s):** Symes, A.

**Contributor(s):** Balkiz, O., Walther, B., Porter, R. & Isfendiyaroglu, S.

**Facilitators(s) and  
Compiler(s):** Capper, D., Derhé, M., O'Brien, A., Pople, R. & Ashpole, J

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Tucker, G.M. and Heath, M.F. 1994. *Birds in Europe: their conservation status*. BirdLife International, Cambridge, U.K.

Walther, B. A. 2006. The winter distribution and habitat use of the near-threatened Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza cineracea*. *Sandgrouse* 28(1): 52-57.

Walther, B. A.; Wisz, M.S.; Rahbek, C. 2004. Known and predicted African winter distributions and habitat use of the endangered Basra Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus griseldis*) and the near-threatened Cinereous Bunting (*Emberiza cineracea*). *Journal of Ornithology* 45: 287-299.

## Citation

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## External Resources

For [Images and External Links to Additional Information](#), please see the [Red List website](#).

# Appendix

## Habitats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Habitat	Season	Suitability	Major Importance?
3. Shrubland -> 3.8. Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation	Breeding	Suitable	No
3. Shrubland -> 3.8. Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation	Non-breeding	Suitable	No
0. Root -> 6. Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)	Breeding	Suitable	No
8. Desert -> 8.2. Desert - Temperate	Breeding	Suitable	No
8. Desert -> 8.2. Desert - Temperate	Non-breeding	Suitable	No
14. Artificial/Terrestrial -> 14.1. Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land	Breeding	Suitable	No
14. Artificial/Terrestrial -> 14.1. Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land	Non-breeding	Suitable	No
0. Root -> 17. Other	Non-breeding	Suitable	No

## Threats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
1. Residential & commercial development -> 1.3. Tourism & recreation areas	Ongoing	Minority (50%)	Slow, significant declines	Low impact: 5
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		
2. Agriculture & aquaculture -> 2.3. Livestock farming & ranching -> 2.3.2. Small-holder grazing, ranching or farming	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, significant declines	Medium impact: 6
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		
3. Energy production & mining -> 3.2. Mining & quarrying	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation 2. Species Stresses -> 2.2. Species disturbance		
3. Energy production & mining -> 3.3. Renewable energy	Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation 2. Species Stresses -> 2.1. Species mortality 2. Species Stresses -> 2.2. Species disturbance		
7. Natural system modifications -> 7.2. Dams & water management/use -> 7.2.11. Dams (size unknown)	Ongoing	Minority (50%)	Slow, significant declines	Low impact: 5
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		



## Conservation Actions in Place

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

<b>Conservation Actions in Place</b>
In-Place Research, Monitoring and Planning
Action Recovery plan: Yes
Systematic monitoring scheme: No
In-Place Land/Water Protection and Management
Conservation sites identified: Yes, over entire range
Occur in at least one PA: Yes
Invasive species control or prevention: No
In-Place Species Management
Successfully reintroduced or introduced benignly: No
Subject to ex-situ conservation: No
In-Place Education
Subject to recent education and awareness programmes: No
Included in international legislation: Yes
Subject to any international management/trade controls: No

## Research Needed

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

<b>Research Needed</b>
1. Research -> 1.2. Population size, distribution & trends
1. Research -> 1.5. Threats
2. Conservation Planning -> 2.1. Species Action/Recovery Plan
3. Monitoring -> 3.1. Population trends

## Additional Data Fields

<b>Distribution</b>
Continuing decline in area of occupancy (AOO): Unknown
Extreme fluctuations in area of occupancy (AOO): No
Estimated extent of occurrence (EOO) (km <sup>2</sup> ): 83000
Continuing decline in extent of occurrence (EOO): Unknown

<b>Distribution</b>
Extreme fluctuations in extent of occurrence (EOO): No
Continuing decline in number of locations: Unknown
Extreme fluctuations in the number of locations: No
Upper elevation limit (m): 2200
<b>Population</b>
Number of mature individuals: 6600-11600
Continuing decline of mature individuals: Unknown
Extreme fluctuations: No
Population severely fragmented: No
Continuing decline in subpopulations: Unknown
Extreme fluctuations in subpopulations: No
All individuals in one subpopulation: No
<b>Habitats and Ecology</b>
Continuing decline in area, extent and/or quality of habitat: Unknown
Generation Length (years): 3.6
Movement patterns: Full Migrant

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