

## SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

*Xenus cinereus*

|  |   |
|--|---|
| English name:<br><b>Terek sandpiper</b>  | Scientific name:<br><b><i>Xenus cinereus</i></b>  |
| Taxonomical group:<br>Class: Aves<br>Order: Charadriiformes<br>Family: Scolopacidae  | Species authority:<br>Güldenstädt, 1775   |
| Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –  | Generation length: 5 years  |
| Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Alien species (I01), Competition and predation (I02), Random threat factors (–), possibly Extra-regional threats (XE)  | Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Alien species (I01), Competition and predation (I02), Random threat factors (–), possibly Extra-regional threats (XE) |
| IUCN Criteria:<br><b>D1</b>  | <b>HELCOM Red List Category:</b> <b>EN</b><br><b>Endangered</b>   |
| Global / European IUCN Red List Category (BirdLife International 2004)<br><br>LC / LC  | Annex I EU Birds Directive<br>yes<br><br>Annex II EU Birds Directive<br>no  |
| Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries:<br><i>Subject of special conservation measures in the EU Member states (Birds Directive, Annex I)</i><br><br>Denmark: –, Estonia: NA, Finland: CR, Germany: –, Latvia: –, Lithuania: –, Poland –/–, Russia: –, Sweden: – |   |

**Range description and general trends:**

The Terek sandpiper mainly breeds in central and northern Russia; however, its range stretches also patchily into Belorussia, the Ukraine, Finland and Latvia. The European breeding population is estimated at 15 000–81 000 bp, representing about a quarter of the global population.



*Xenus cinereus*. Photo by Christoph Moning.

**Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region**

In the Baltic Sea area, there are only few breeding places with a low number of breeding pairs in Finland, St Petersburg Region of Russia and Latvia.

In **Finland**, the Terek sandpiper has been breeding since the 19th century, but has always been scarce despite temporal fluctuations on its resorts on the islets of the Bothnian Bay. Finnish numbers peaked at c. 30 bp in the 1980s. Currently, there are 5–10 bp.

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In the **St Petersburg** region of **Russia**, the general trend seems to be increasing, despite considerable fluctuations. The total number of breeding pairs is estimated at 20–60.

In **Latvia**, the Terek sandpiper is a very rare bird. Nesting was first confirmed in 1980; the only nesting place is Nagli fishponds (eastern part of Latvia, now part of NATURA 2000 site Lubaans). Outside this place there have been not more than 10 observations during last 30 years. The breeding population is 1–2, maximum 5 pairs.

Table1: Population number of the Terek sandpiper in the Baltic Sea area. For population trends 0=stable, -=decreasing, +=increasing.

| Country           | Population size |      | Short-term<br>population trend<br>(10 years) | Long-term<br>population trend<br>(50 years) |
|-------------------|-----------------|------|--|---|
|                   | Breeding pairs  | Year |  |   |
| Finland           | 5–10            | 2009 | 0  | -   |
| Latvia            | 1–2             | 2009 | 0  | 0   |
| Russia, PET       | 20–60           | 2010 | +  | +   |
| <b>Baltic Sea</b> | <b>30–70</b>    |      |  |   |

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### Distribution map



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### Habitat and ecology

The Finnish breeding sites are mainly anthropogenic habitats around industrial resorts and harbours. Most territories have been found on landfills and pulp sinks of wood processing plants with ample bark and wood-residue bottom layer and muddy shores (Ojanen & Rauhala 1997). Older locations are often sparsely vegetated, vaguely reminiscent of the species original habitats on Siberian marshy riverbanks. Even sites of more natural state in the Bothnian Bay tend to have plenty of driftwood and debris on the shore.

The known breeding sites in St Petersburg Region at the first glance look quite different, but it is always a combination of several components: shallow waters with somewhat fluctuating water levels, sandy or gravely shores or river banks, and meadows with low vegetation.

### Description of major threats

Unlike most other threatened waders in the Baltic region, the Terek sandpiper it is not predominantly a pasture-dweller. Although there are no habitat losses, the species has not markedly increased in Finland. The breeding success is not well known, but there are indications of increased nest predation due to the overall increase of common gulls, crows and mammalian predators. Unpredictable changes in the availability of anthropogenic habitats in the wood processing industry can create stochasticity that can drive small range populations to extinction within a short period of time. There are also former indications of illegal egg collection at the breeding sites. According to ring recoveries, the Finnish birds take a south-western migration route via southern France (Camargue; Glutz v. Blotzheim *et al.* 1977, Martin 1983), possibly overwintering in western Africa (Lake Tchad, coasts of Nigeria, Gaboon, northern Angola). These are areas of unstable environments, desertification and land degradation. However, the exact wintering areas of the Baltic Terek sandpipers are not yet known.

### Assessment justification

The Baltic breeding population is estimated to only 30–70 pairs. The species is categorized as *Endangered* (EN) due to its small population size (criterion D1). However, the Baltic breeding sites are representing the outermost margins of the range of the species. In its total range the species is evaluated as “secure” (BirdLife International 2004).

### Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

Ringling programmes and population studies should be started in order to reveal the wintering sites, migration routes and basic population parameters of the Baltic breeding birds. More efforts are also needed to locate all breeding sites in the Bothnian Bay. At anthropogenic breeding sites, authorities should be aware of the presence of the species and its legal status.

### Common names

Denmark: Terekklire, Estonia: Hallkibu, hallkibu (kibutilder), Hallkibu e. kibutilder, Finland: rantakurvi, Germany: Terekwasserläufer, Latvia: Mazā puskuitala, Pelēkā terekija, Pelēkā tilbīte, Terekija, Lithuania: Terekija, Poland: terekia, Russia: Мородунка, Sweden: Tereksnäppa

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- Estonian Red List of Threatened Species (2008): Available at <http://elurikkus.ut.ee/prmt.php?lang=eng>.
- Glutz v. Blotzheim, U.N., K.M. Bauer & E. Bezzel (1977): Handbuch der Vögel Mitteleuropas. Volume 7 Charadriiformes (Part 2). Akademische Verlagsgesell., Wiesbaden.
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