

# *Botaurus stellaris*

## GREAT BITTERN

**SPEC 3** (1994: 3) **Status** Depleted

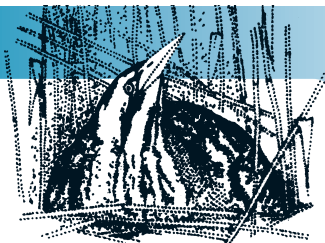
**Criteria** Large historical decline

**European IUCN Red List Category** —

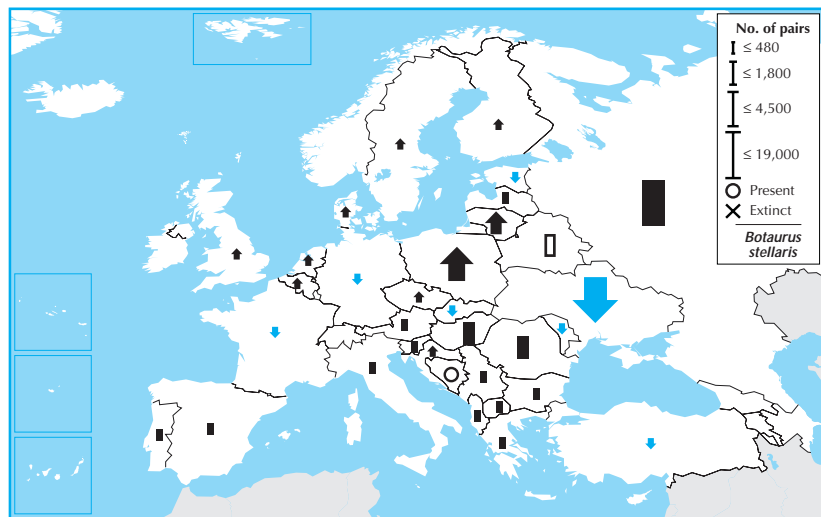
**Criteria** —

**Global IUCN Red List Category** —

**Criteria** —



*Botaurus stellaris* is a widespread but patchily distributed breeder across much of Europe, which accounts for less than half its global breeding range. Its European breeding population is relatively small (<54,000 pairs), and underwent a large decline between 1970–1990. Although the species was stable overall during 1990–2000, with stable or increasing trends across much of Europe (Ukraine being a notable exception), its population has clearly not yet recovered to the level that preceded its decline. Consequently, it is evaluated as Depleted.



| Country                | Breeding pop. size (pairs)          | Year(s) | Trend | Mag. %                      | References                 |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|-------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Albania                | 5 – 15                              | 96–02   | 0     | 0–19                        |                            |
| Austria                | 100 – 130                           | 98–02   | 0     | 0–19                        |                            |
| Belarus                | <b>950 – 1,200</b>                  | 97–02   | ?     | –                           |                            |
| Belgium                | <b>12 – 20</b>                      | 95–02   | +     | <b>0–19</b>                 | 1                          |
| Bosnia & HG            | Present                             | 85–89   | ?     | –                           | 1                          |
| Bulgaria               | 20 – 70                             | 95–02   | (0)   | (0–19)                      |                            |
| Croatia                | 60 – 100                            | 02      | (+)   | (>80)                       | 54,16                      |
| Czech Rep.             | <b>30 – 40</b>                      | 00      | +     | <b>30–49</b>                |                            |
| Denmark                | 200 – 300                           | 99–00   | +     | 10–19                       | 16                         |
| Estonia                | 100 – 150                           | 98      | –     | 20–29                       | 1                          |
| Finland                | 200 – 300                           | 99–01   | +     | <b>100</b>                  |                            |
| France                 | <b>270 – 317</b>                    | 00      | –     | 0–9                         | 6                          |
| Germany                | 360 – 620                           | 95–99   | –     | 20–29                       |                            |
| Greece                 | <b>10 – 15</b>                      | 02      | 0     | 0–19                        |                            |
| Hungary                | <b>700 – 1,000</b>                  | 98–01   | 0     | 0–19                        |                            |
| Italy                  | 50 – 70                             | 03      | F     | 30–49                       | 6                          |
| Latvia                 | 300 – 500                           | 00–03   | (0)   | (0–19)                      | 23                         |
| Lithuania              | <b>800 – 1,000</b>                  | 99–01   | +     | 0–19                        | 20                         |
| Macedonia              | (1 – 10)                            | 99–00   | (0)   | (0–19)                      |                            |
| Moldova                | 30 – 40                             | 90–00   | –     | 20–29                       |                            |
| Netherlands            | <b>200 – 250</b>                    | 98–00   | +     | <b>34</b>                   | 1                          |
| Poland                 | <b>4,100 – 4,800</b>                | 02–03   | (+)   | (0–19)                      | 10,11                      |
| Portugal               | 0 – 3                               | 02      | (F)   | (–)                         |                            |
| Romania                | (1,500 – 2,000)                     | 99–02   | (0)   | (0–19)                      |                            |
| Russia                 | (13,000 – 25,000)                   | 90–00   | 0     | 0–19                        | 8,31,33,44,70,73,104       |
| Serbia & MN            | 200 – 300                           | 95–02   | 0     | 0–19                        | 1,29,78,101,100,203,155    |
| Slovakia               | 50 – 100                            | 80–99   | –     | 30–49                       |                            |
| Slovenia               | <b>0 – 2</b>                        | 90–00   | F     | <b>&gt;80</b>               |                            |
| Spain                  | 0 – 50                              | 98–02   | (F)   | (–)                         | 10,16                      |
| Sweden                 | <b>360 – 400</b>                    | 99–00   | +     | <b>10–19</b>                |                            |
| Turkey                 | (300 – 600)                         | 01      | (–)   | (0–19)                      |                            |
| Ukraine                | 10,000 – 15,000                     | 90–00   | –     | 5–9                         |                            |
| UK                     | <b>21 – 21</b>                      | 97–01   | +     | <b>16</b>                   |                            |
| <b>Total (approx.)</b> | <b>34,000 – 54,000</b>              |         |       | <b>Overall trend Stable</b> |                            |
| <b>Breeding range</b>  | <b>&gt;3,000,000 km<sup>2</sup></b> |         |       | <b>Gen. length 4</b>        | <b>% Global pop. 25–49</b> |

### Winter pop. size (individuals)

|                           |        |                              |
|---------------------------|--------|------------------------------|
| <b>Total (approx.)</b>    | >2,400 | <b>Overall trend Unknown</b> |
| <b>% in European IBAs</b> | 4–7    | <b>Gen. length 4</b>         |
|                           |        | <b>% Global pop. 25–49</b>   |

|  |           |        |          |
|--|-----------|--------|----------|
| <b>2000 population</b>                       | 47        | 34     | 19       |
| <b>1990 population</b>                       | 66        | 17     | 17       |
| <b>Data quality (%) – Botaurus stellaris</b> |           |        |          |
|  | □ unknown | □ poor | □ medium |
|  | □ good    |        |          |
| <b>1990–2000 trend</b>                       | 17        | 79     |          |
| <b>1970–1990 trend</b>                       | 72        | 10     | 18       |