

Population Trends of Common European Breeding Birds 2012



Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS)



This leaflet presents the combined bird species trends of 148 common bird species based on data collected from 25 European countries, covering the period 1980–2010.

- Of the 148 species covered, 41 have increased moderately and 2 strongly, 22 remained stable and trends of 5 were classified as uncertain.
- In 11 cases do species' trends remain 2 steeply, while 37 have remained stable.
- 37 species were classified as farmland birds, of which 22 declined, 6 increased, 6 remained stable and trends of 3 were classified as uncertain.

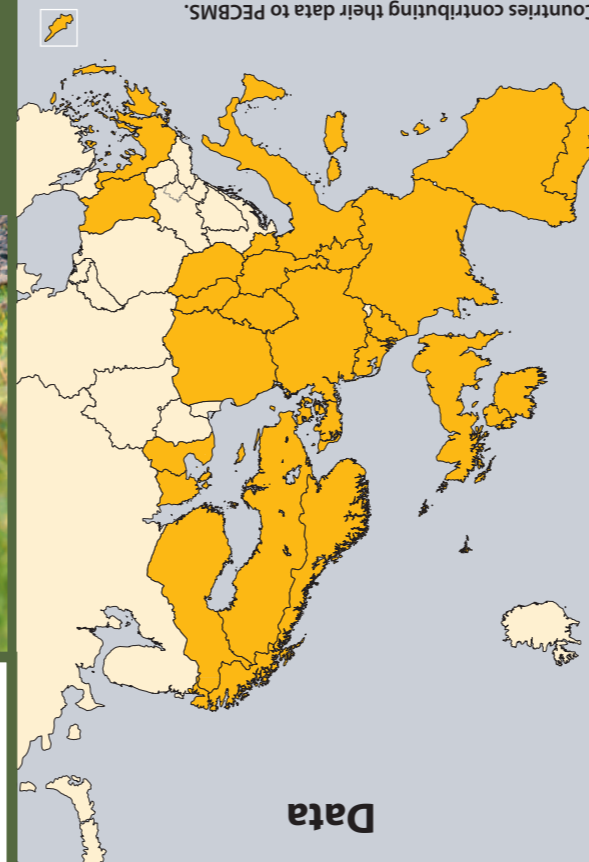
33 species were classified as forest birds, of which 10 declined, 11 increased, 9 remained stable and trends of 3 were classified as uncertain.

The other 78 species were classified as other common birds, and included generalists and specialists of other habitats. Of these, 25 declined, 26 increased, 22 remained stable and trends of 5 were classified as uncertain.

In addition to species' trends and indices it is relevant to explore the changes in bird abundance and biomass. The biodiversity loss presented by absolute numbers of individuals and tons of biomass might bring a complementary message not only to researchers but also to the public and policy makers.

Photo by P. Šaj (birdphoto.cz)

We estimate the numbers of Meadow Pipit dropped by few tens of millions individuals in Europe between 1980 and 2010. The decline represents a 66% reduction of this farmland species' population in Europe.



The data are derived from annually operated breeding bird surveys in 25 countries, spanning different periods, coordinated through the PECBMS. More than 10 000 volunteer counters took part in the surveys. New development in computer techniques allowed us to use data from multiple schemes within one country (Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden). For details and methods see <http://www.ebcc.info/methods2012.html>.

Countries contributing their data to PECBMS.

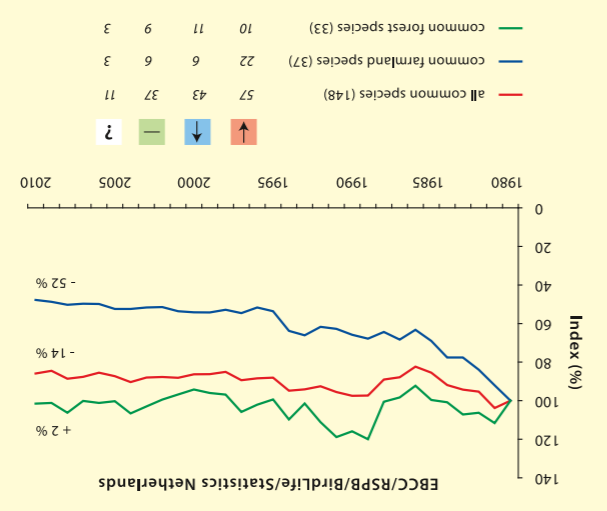


Grey Partridge belongs to the species as in the biomass of farmland birds across Europe. During thirty years (1980–2010) its population experienced an estimated loss of several millions individuals.

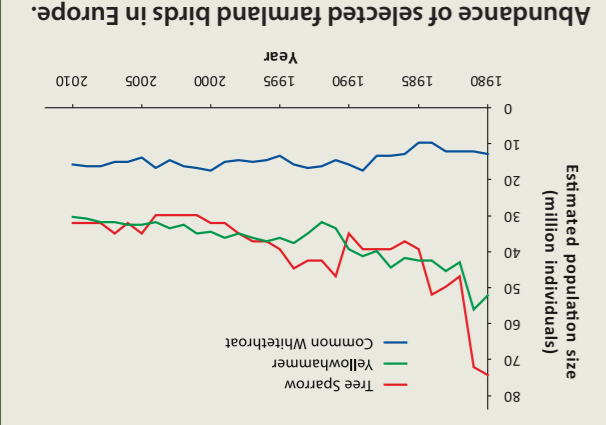
Photo by D. Boucny (birdphoto.cz)

The absolute numbers of bird individuals that we have lost in last three decades is alarming. This loss corresponds well with the index of biomass of farmland birds which has more than halved during that period (Voříšek et al. 2010, <http://www.bou.org.uk/bouproc-net/ffb3/voříšek-et-al>). Even though there are 6 farmland species increasing, such as the Common Whitethroat, their rising function and services are needed.

The numbers in italics show the numbers of species in each indicator. The numbers in parentheses show the numbers of species in each indicator. For explanation of categories of species' trend see the table (reverse side of this leaflet).



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In this update, we present indicators based on increased number of species. For the first time we were able to include data on Black Grouse, Red-spotted Bluethroat and Red-legged Partridge. The overall pattern of population changes has remained unchanged. The decline of common farmland birds has been pronounced and common forest birds still appear to keep stable.

PECBMS national data providers

Austria BirdLife ÖSTERREICH	Belgium Aves	Bulgaria БЪЛГАРСКО ОРНИТОЛОГИЧНО СЪОБЩЕСТВО	Cyprus Ornithological Society of Cyprus	Czech Republic ČSO	Denmark Dansk Ornithologisk Forening
Denmark DANISH MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT	Estonia Eesti Linnulindude Selts	Finland Suomen Luontoliiton Ornitologit	France Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle	Germany DDA Deutscher Ornithologenverband	
Greece Ελληνική Ορνιθολογική Εταιρεία	Hungary Magyar Madártani Társaság	Ireland The Irish Ornithological Society	Netherlands Nederlandse Vereniging van Vogelpersooneigenaren	Italy ZIPU	
Italy NITO	Latvia Latvijas Ornitolu biedrība	Norway Sovon	Norway Naturforvaltning		
Norway NINA	Poland TOP	Poland SOS/BirdLife SLOVENSKO	Portugal spea		
Slovakia SOS/BirdLife SLOVENSKO	Slovenia DOPPS	Slovenia REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT			
Spain SEO/BirdLife	Spain PRIMITIVO DE HEDERABENITE Y PEDRO RAJA, I. PARRINO	Spain Generalitat de Catalunya Government of Catalonia			
Sweden LUND UNIVERSITY	Switzerland NATUR VÄRDS VERKET	Switzerland vogelwarte.ch	United Kingdom BTO	United Kingdom JNCC	United Kingdom RSPB



Photo by D. Jirovský (wildbirdphoto.eu)

Also some forest birds have declined. Since 1980 the European population of the Willow Tit has dropped by 69% – an estimated loss of several millions individuals.

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Legend for Table

The quality of outputs may differ species by species. In some cases, the coverage of species' populations and thus the representativeness of the data may be lower at the beginning of the time series (for information on the time span and the list of countries contributing with their data for individual species, see <http://www.ebcc.info/trends2012.html>). Furthermore, year to year fluctuations might not always reflect real population change, so we recommend cautious interpretation of year by year changes. Readers should also pay attention to individual species' legends.

Long/short-term trend: change (in %) in an index value between first and last year of a time period.

Long/short-term annual change: average percentage change per year.

Long-term: 1980–2010, **Short-term:** 1990–2010.

Trend classification: ↑ strong increase, ↑ moderate increase, — stable, ↓ moderate decline, ↓↓ steep decline, ? uncertain.

Habitat: for – forest, farm – farmland, oth – other.

- 1 Long-term trend not available.
- 2 Long-term trend: 1981–2010.
- 3 Long-term trend: 1982–2010.
- 4 Long-term trend: 1984–2010.
- 5 Short-term trend: 1991–2010.
- 6 Short-term trend: 1998–2010.
- 7 Short-term trend: 1999–2010.
- 8 Short-term trend: 2000–2010.
- 9 Index for early period may be unrepresentative due to limited geographical coverage and needs to be treated with caution.
- 10 Index might be influenced by releases by hunters.
- 11 Index only represents population change of subspecies *Luscinia svecica svecica*.

Trend classification

The multiplicative overall slope estimate (trend value) in TRIM is converted into one of the following categories. The category depends on the overall slope, as well as its 95% confidence interval (= slope +/- 1.96 times the standard error of the slope).

➤ **Strong increase** – increase significantly more than 5% per year (5% would mean a doubling in abundance within 15 years). Criterion: lower limit of confidence interval > 1.05.

➤ **Moderate increase** – significant increase, but not significantly more than 5% per year. Criterion: 1.00 < lower limit of confidence interval < 1.05.

➤ **Stable** – no significant increase or decline, and most probable trends are less than 5% per year. Criterion: confidence interval encloses 1.00 but lower limit > 0.95 and upper limit < 1.05.

➤ **Uncertain** – no significant increase or decline, and unlikely trends are less than 5% per year. Criterion: confidence interval encloses 1.00 but lower limit < 0.95 or upper limit > 1.05.

➤ **Moderate decline** – significant decline, but not significantly more than 5% per year. Criterion: 0.95 < upper limit of confidence interval < 1.00.

➤ **Steep decline** – decline significantly more than 5% per year (5% would mean a halving in abundance within 15 years). Criterion: upper limit of confidence interval < 0.95.

For more details on species trends, including standard errors, see <http://www.ebcc.info/trends2012.html>.

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Species		Long-term		Class.	Short-term		Class.	Habitat
		Trend (%)	Annual Change (%)		Trend (%)	Annual Change (%)		
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	White Stork ^{3,9}	240	4.42	↑	32	2.27	↑	farm
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Western Marsh-harrier	351	4.21	↑	14	-0.71	—	oth
<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	Zitting Cisticola ^{1,6}				-37	-0.92	↓	oth
<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	Hawfinch ⁹	474	1.66	↑	-31	-1.02	—	for
<i>Columba oenas</i>	Stock Dove	28	0.82	—	27	1.09	—	for
<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Common Wood-pigeon	103	1.91	↑	39	1.83	↑	oth
<i>Corvus corax</i>	Common Raven	75	2.25	↑	31	0.88	—	oth
<i>Corvus corone & cornix</i>	Carrion & Hooded Crow	30	0.68	↑	8	0.46	—	oth
<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Rook	51	1.25	↑	28	1.13	↑	farm
<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Eurasian Jackdaw ⁹	23	-0.43	—	-19	-1.10	—	oth
<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Common Cuckoo	-19	-1.16	↓	-13	-0.54	—	oth
<i>Cyanopica cyanus</i>	Azure-winged Magpie ^{1,6}				43	3.78	↑	for
<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Mute Swan	32	1.87	↑	43	1.59	↑	oth
<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Northern House-martin	-8	-1.38	↓	-9	-1.28	—	oth
<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Great Spotted Woodpecker	65	1.69	↑	24	2.19	↑	oth
<i>Dendrocopos medius</i>	Middle Spotted Woodpecker ¹				14	1.29	—	for
<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker ⁹	-78	-3.40	?	-63	-4.27	?	for
<i>Dendrocopos syriacus</i>	Syrian Woodpecker ^{1,7}				-3	-3.78	?	oth
<i>Dryocopus martius</i>	Black Woodpecker	123	1.68	↑	54	2.12	—	for
<i>Emberiza cia</i>	Rock Bunting ^{1,6}				33	0.30	—	oth
<i>Emberiza cirius</i>	Cirl Bunting ¹				45	3.33	↑	farm
<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Yellowhammer	-42	-1.49	↓	-23	-0.81	↓	farm
<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>	Ortolan Bunting ⁹	-87	-6.22	↓↓	-52	-1.28	—	farm
<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	Black-headed Bunting ^{1,8}				21	0.30	?	farm
<i>Emberiza rustica</i>	Rustic Bunting	-81	-5.48	↓	-76	-7.73	↓↓	for
<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Reed Bunting	-24	-0.71	↓	-17	-0.96	↓	oth
<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	European Robin	15	1.12	↑	4	0.69	↑	oth
<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Common Kestrel	-38	-0.83	↓	-42	-2.74	↓	farm
<i>Ficedula albicollis</i>	Collared Flycatcher ^{3,9}	186	2.46	↑	79	0.41	—	for

<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	European Pied Flycatcher	-19	-1.20	↓	-24	-1.61	↓	for
<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Eurasian Chaffinch	13	0.21	↑	-1	-0.04	—	oth
<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Brambling	-76	-3.59	↓	-43	-3.28	↓	oth
<i>Fulica atra</i>	Common Coot ⁹	32	1.03	↑	-3	-0.19	—	oth
<i>Galerida cristata</i>	Crested Lark ^{3,9}	-95	-10.75	↓	0	3.97	?	farm
<i>Galerida theklae</i>	Thekla Lark ^{1,6}				24	2.38	↑	farm
<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Common Snipe	-53	-2.19	↓	-40	-0.98	↓	oth
<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Common Moorhen	-9	0.41	—	-5	0.47	—	oth
<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Eurasian Jay	22	0.84	↑	31	1.72	↑	for
<i>Hippolais icterina</i>	Icterine Warbler	-33	-1.64	↓	-3	-1.20	↓	oth
<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	Melodious Warbler ¹				-18	-0.87	—	oth
<i>Hirundo rupestris</i>	Eurasian Crag-martin ^{1,6}				17	-0.15	—	oth
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Barn Swallow	5	-0.47	—	-15	-1.63	↓	farm
<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	Eurasian Wryneck ⁹	-50	-2.92	↓	-33	-2.13	↓	oth
<i>Lanius collurio</i>	Red-backed Shrike	-42	0.18	—	21	0.42	—	farm
<i>Lanius minor</i>	Lesser Grey Shrike ^{1,7}				-52	-6.10	↓	farm
<i>Lanius senator</i>	Woodchat Shrike ^{1,6}				-28	-2.28	↓	farm
<i>Limosa limosa</i>	Black-tailed Godwit ⁴	-40	-2.88	↓	-50	-3.55	↓	farm
<i>Locustella fluviatilis</i>	Eurasian River Warbler ^{3,9}	-68	-2.45	↓	-59	-3.57	↓	oth
<i>Locustella naevia</i>	Common Grasshopper-warbler	-51	-0.68	—	-25	-1.41	—	oth
<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Wood Lark ⁹	-5	3.01	?	34	0.43	—	oth
<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>	Thrush Nightingale	-6	-0.07	—	-15	-0.60	—	oth
<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	Common Nightingale	-61	-1.76	↓	0	0.45	—	oth
<i>Luscinia svecica svecica</i>	Red-spotted Bluethroat ^{1,8,11}				2	-5.19	↓	oth
<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>	Calandra Lark ^{1,6}				-30	-4.00	↓	farm
<i>Merops apiaster</i>	European Bee-eater ¹				76	0.20	?	oth
<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	Corn Bunting	-63	-3.21	↓	-23	-1.43	↓	farm
<i>Motacilla alba</i>	White Wagtail	-12	-0.34	—	-27	-0.76	—	oth
<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Grey Wagtail ^{3,9}	-47	-1.38	↓	-45	-2.22	↓	oth
<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Yellow Wagtail	-50	-2.39	↓	2	0.50	—	farm
<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Spotted Flycatcher	-39	-1.79	↓	-15	-1.25	—	oth
<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>	Spotted Nuthacker	45	0.24	—	-52	-1.92	—	for
<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Whimbrel ⁴	19	0.21	—	51	1.40	—	oth
<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>	Black-eared Wheatear ^{1,6}				-11	-2.06	↓	farm

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Species		Long-term		Class.	Short-term		Class.	Habitat
		Trend (%)	Annual Change (%)		Trend (%)	Annual Change (%)		
<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Northern Wheatear ⁹	-61	-2.99	↓	-54	-2.97	↓	oth
<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	Eurasian Golden Oriole ³	16	0.29	—	26	1.29	—	oth
<i>Parus ater</i>	Coal Tit	-7	-0.53	—	-19	-1.23	—	for
<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	Blue Tit	45	1.31	↑	41	1.80	↑	oth
<i>Parus cristatus</i>	Crested Tit	-36	-0.81	—	-10	0.39	—	for
<i>Parus major</i>	Great Tit	14	0.31	↑	19	0.89	↑	oth
<i>Parus montanus</i>	Willow Tit	-69	-3.18	↓	-54	-2.04	↓	for
<i>Parus palustris</i>	Marsh Tit	-22	-1.39	↓	4	0.31	—	for
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House Sparrow	-61	-2.21	↓	-5	-0.31	—	oth
<i>Passer montanus</i>	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	-57	-2.10	↓	-9	-1.67	↓	farm
<i>Perdix perdix</i>	Grey Partridge	-94	-10.12	↓↓	-90	-12.38	↓↓	farm
<i>Petronia petronia</i>	Rock Sparrow ^{1,6}				13	1.34	—	farm
<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	Black Redstart ^{3,9}	70	1.08	↑	9	0.21	—	oth
<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Common Redstart	25	0.82	↑	69	1.57	↑	for
<i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>	Bonelli's Warbler ¹				-33	-1.28	?	for
<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Common Chiffchaff	85	1.89	↑	-11	-0.44	↓	for
<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Wood Warbler	-36	-2.35	↓	-37	-2.97	↓	for
<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Willow Warbler	-31	-1.55	↓	-31	-1.61	↓	oth
<i>Pica pica</i>	Black-billed Magpie	-1	-1.04	↓	-41	-3.38	↓	oth
<i>Picus canus</i>	Grey-faced Woodpecker ^{3,9}	244	2.29	?	-22	-1.37	—	for
<i>Picus viridis</i>	Eurasian Green Woodpecker	51	2.68	↑	51	2.65	↑	oth
<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	Eurasian Golden Plover ^{2,9}	-8	-0.63	—	61	1.14	—	oth
<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Hedge Accentor	-32	-1.19	↓	-13	-0.68	↓	oth
<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	Red-billed Chough ^{1,6}				71	1.54	—	oth
<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Eurasian Bullfinch	-42	-1.70	↓	-18	-2.78	↓	for
<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	Firecrest ^{3,9}	-25	-0.22	—	-36	-0.19	—	for
<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Goldcrest	-51	-1.68	↓	-64	-2.90	↓	for
<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	Whinchat	-71	-2.07	↓	-24	-0.55	—	farm
<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>	Common Stonechat ¹				22	-0.03	—	farm
<i>Serinus serinus</i>	European Serin ^{3,9}	-31	-2.67	↓	-23	-2.12	↓	farm

<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Wood Nuthatch	85	1.51	↑	-2	0.31	—	for
<i>Streptopelia decacto</i>	Eurasian Collared-dove	94	1.63	↑	155	4.40	↑	oth
<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	European Turtle-dove	-73	-3.89	↓	-29	-1.16	↓	farm
<i>Sturnus unicolor</i>	Spotless Starling ^{1,6}				45	2.14	↑	farm
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Common Starling	-52	-1.81	↓	-9	-0.86	↓	farm
<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Blackcap	119	2.83	↑	47	2.37	↑	oth
<i>Sylvia borin</i>	Garden Warbler	-18	-0.73	↓	-17	-0.78	↓	oth
<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>	Subalpine Warbler ¹				62	4.29	?	oth
<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Common Whitethroat	23	1.07	↑	0	0.22	—	farm
<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	Lesser Whitethroat	-18	0.16	—	6	0.09	—	oth
<i>Sylvia hortensis</i>	Orphean Warbler ¹				108	9.28	↑↑	oth
<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	Sardinian Warbler ¹				95	1.44	—	oth
<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>	Barred Warbler ^{3,9}	-53	-3.69	?	-47	-3.98	↓	oth
<i>Sylvia undata</i>	Dartford Warbler ^{1,6}				-53	-5.15	↓	oth
<i>Tetrao tetrix</i>	Black Grouse ^{1,8}				-5	3.41	↑	oth
<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Wood Sandpiper	-28	-0.77	↓	7	-0.87	—	oth
<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	Green Sandpiper ⁹	-4	0.98	↑	0	0.58	—	for
<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Common Redshank	-51	-2.38	↓	-46	-3.13	↓	oth
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Winter Wren	29	1.61	↑	-10	0.98	↑	oth
<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Redwing	-12	-0.24	—	-9	0.17	—	oth
<i>Turdus merula</i>	Eurasian Blackbird	25	1.12	↑	24	1.05	↑	oth
<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Song Thrush	2	0.40	↑	24	1.24	↑	oth
<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Fieldfare	-13	0.11	—	-48	-1.50	↓	oth
<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Mistle Thrush	-21	-0.75	↓	-9	-0.49	—	for
<i>Upupa epops</i>	Eurasian Hoopoe ^{3,9}	141	3.44	?	-23	0.04	—	farm
<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Northern Lapwing	-50	-2.93	↓	-35	-2.07	↓	farm

Species names: BirdLife International (2011). The BirdLife checklist of the birds of the world, with conservation status and taxonomic sources. Version 4. Downloaded from <http://www.birdlife.info/im/species/checklist.zip>
Table with species names ordered according to taxonomy can be found on <http://www.ebcc.info/trends2012.html>.