Rhinolophus hipposideros, Lesser Horseshoe Bat

Assessment by: Taylor, P.

View on www.iucnredlist.org
Taxonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kingdom</th>
<th>Phylum</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animalia</td>
<td>Chordata</td>
<td>Mammalia</td>
<td>Chiroptera</td>
<td>Rhinolophidae</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Taxon Name:** *Rhinolophus hipposideros* (Bechstein, 1800)

**Regional Assessments:**
- Mediterranean
- Europe

**Common Name(s):**
- English: Lesser Horseshoe Bat
- French: Petit Rhinolophe fer à cheval
- Spanish: Murciélago Pequeño de Herradura

**Assessment Information**

**Red List Category & Criteria:** Least Concern
version 3.1

**Year Published:** 2016

**Date Assessed:** April 25, 2016

**Justification:**
This species has a large range. Although there have been marked and well-documented declines in some areas, the species remains widespread, fairly common, and apparently stable in other areas. Assessed as Least Concern.

**Previously Published Red List Assessments**
- 2004 – Least Concern (LC)
- 1996 – Vulnerable (VU)

**Geographic Range**

**Range Description:**
The Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) is widely distributed in the western and central Palaearctic. It is found in almost all the European countries (including the islands of the Mediterranean region). In North Africa it is recorded from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and the eastern part of the Sinai (to Egypt). It also occurs in most of the Middle East countries, from Turkey and western Arabian Peninsula to southern Iran, and extends to some regions of Central Asia and Indian subcontinent, where it is patchily distributed.

This species can be found at altitudes ranging from sea level to 2,000 m.

**Country Occurrence:**

http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2016-2.RLTS.T19518A21972794.en
Native: Afghanistan; Albania; Algeria; Andorra; Armenia (Armenia); Austria; Azerbaijan; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; China; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Djibouti; Egypt (Sinaî); Eritrea; Ethiopia; France (Corsica); Georgia; Germany; Greece (Kriti); Holy See (Vatican City State); Hungary; India; Iran, Islamic Republic of; Iraq; Ireland; Israel; Italy (Sardegna, Sicilia); Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Lebanon; Luxembourg; Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of; Malta; Moldova; Monaco; Montenegro; Morocco; Pakistan; Palestinian Territory, Occupied; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; San Marino; Saudi Arabia; Serbia (Serbia); Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain (Baleares); Sudan; Switzerland; Syrian Arab Republic; Tajikistan; Tunisia; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Uzbekistan

Regionally extinct: Gibraltar; Liechtenstein; Netherlands
Distribution Map
Rhinolophus hipposideros

Compiled by:
IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)
Population

An infrequent species in the northern part of its range. In Europe it forms summer colonies of 10-50 individuals (occasionally up to 1,500 animals). Solitary in winter or loose aggregations up to 500 animals per roost. Since the 1950s the northern border of the range in western and central Europe has moved southwards. In the Netherlands, northern Belgium and Germany with the exception of a few colonies in Bavaria, Thüringen, Sachsen and Sachsen-Anhalt the species has become extinct (Fairon et al. 1982, Schofield 1999). It disappeared from northern and western parts of Bohemia, and much of Poland where 87% of the hibernating population was lost between 1950 and 1990 (Urbanczyk 1994, Ohlendorf 1997). In Switzerland and Austria the distribution became fragmented, as colonies remained only in higher elevations (>400 m) (Stutz and Haffner 1984, Spitzenberger 2002), although in Switzerland the population has started to recover slowly over the last 10 years (increasing from 2,200 to 2,500 adults counted in maternity roosts: H. Kraettli pers. comm. 2006). In Spain some colonies have disappeared due to the restoration of buildings, but there are no data on population trend (J. Juste and T. Alcalde pers. comm. 2006), and in France there have been some declines in the north, although large populations in the south are thought to be more stable (EMA Workshop 2006). It is now considered extinct in Gibraltar (S. Finlayson pers. comm. 2015). Populations in southwestern Czech Republic are now recovering and, though more studies are required, it is thought that this demographic increase might reflect a general pattern in Central Europe (Horáček 2010, Bufka and Červený 2012, Chytil and Gaisler 2012).

In the southwest Asian part of the range it gathers in wintering colonies of up to 40 animals, although it is mainly solitary (K. Tsytsulina pers. comm. 2005). In Turkey it is a commonly reported species, and the population is stable (A. Karataş pers. comm. 2005). It is common in Iran although encountered less frequently than *R. ferrumequinum* (M. Sharifi pers. comm. 2005). It is not known how abundant this species is in Jordan and Syria but it may be more common than the collection reports indicate (Amr 2000).

Population size and trends within Africa and South Asia are unknown.

**Current Population Trend:** Decreasing

Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

It forages close to ground within and along the edges of broadleaf deciduous woodland, which represents its primary foraging habitat, but also in riparian vegetation, Mediterranean and sub-mediterranean shrubland. Its prey consists mainly of midges, moths and craneflies. Foraging activities take place nearly exclusively within woodland areas, while open areas are avoided (Zahn et al. 2008, Lino et al. 2014). Habitat loss and fragmentation may therefore reduce the amount of suitable habitats for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat and pose a threat to this species (Reiter et al. 2013).

Summer roosts (breeding colonies) are found in natural and artificial underground sites in the southern part of the range, and in attics and buildings in the northern part of it. In winter it hibernates in underground sites (including cellars, small caves and burrows). A sedentary species, winter and summer roosts are usually found within 5-10 km (longest distance recorded 153 km: Heymer 1964 in Hutterer et al. 2005).
**Systems:** Terrestrial

**Threats (see Appendix for additional information)**

Threats include disturbance and loss of underground habitats and attics (by conversion of attics for human habitation), agricultural intensification, fragmentation and isolation of habitats, and the use of pesticides in agricultural areas.

**Conservation Actions**

Protected by national legislation in all European range states. There are international legal obligations for protection through Bonn Convention (Eurobats) and Bern Convention, where those apply. Included in Annex II (and IV) of EU Habitats and Species Directive and hence requiring special measures for conservation including designation of Special Areas for Conservation. Some habitat protection through Natura 2000. Recommended conservation measures include protecting maternity roosting sites, hibernation caves and foraging habitats.

No specific conservation measures apply in South Asia; more research and monitoring is needed.

**Credits**

**Assessor(s):** Taylor, P.

**Reviewer(s):** Racey, P.A.

**Contributor(s):** Jacobs, D., Cotterill, F., Aulagnier, S., Juste, J., Spitzenberger, F. & Hutson, A.M.
Bibliography


**Citation**

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**External Resources**
For Images and External Links to Additional Information, please see the Red List website.
## Appendix

### Habitats


<table>
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<tr>
<th>Habitat</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Suitability</th>
<th>Major Importance?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Forest -&gt; 1.4. Forest - Temperate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shrubland -&gt; 3.4. Shrubland - Temperate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shrubland -&gt; 3.5. Shrubland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shrubland -&gt; 3.7. Shrubland - Subtropical/Tropical High Altitude</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shrubland -&gt; 3.8. Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Grassland -&gt; 4.4. Grassland - Temperate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Caves and Subterranean Habitats (non-aquatic) -&gt; 7.1. Caves</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subterranean Habitats (non-aquatic) - Caves</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Caves and Subterranean Habitats (non-aquatic) -&gt; 7.2. Caves</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subterranean Habitats (non-aquatic) - Other Subterranean Habitats</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Artificial/Terrestrial -&gt; 14.5. Artificial/Terrestrial - Urban</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Suitable</td>
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<td>Areas</td>
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### Threats


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threat</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Severity</th>
<th>Impact Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Natural system modifications -&gt; 7.3. Other ecosystem modifications</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stresses: 1. Ecosystem stresses -&gt; 1.2. Ecosystem degradation</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Pollution -&gt; 9.3. Agricultural &amp; forestry effluents -&gt;</td>
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<td>9.3.4. Type Unknown/Unrecorded</td>
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<td>Stresses: 1. Ecosystem stresses -&gt; 1.2. Ecosystem degradation</td>
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### Additional Data Fields

#### Distribution

- Estimated extent of occurrence (EOO) (km²): 22157273
- Lower elevation limit (m): 0
- Upper elevation limit (m): 2000

#### Population

- Population severely fragmented: No
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitats and Ecology</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generation Length (years): 7</td>
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</table>
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