

Books, reports & journals

Carrascal, L. & D. Palomino 2008. The common breeding birds in Spain.

Populations in 2004-2006. SEO/BirdLife, Madrid. 202 pages. (in Spanish: *Las aves comunes reproductoras en España. Población en 2004-2006*, with a short English summary). ISBN 978-84-936441-3-0.

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The database from the long-term monitoring scheme on common breeding birds in Spain (SACRE, in Spanish) was used to estimate the average population sizes of 95 species from 2004 to 2006 (birds of the Canary and the Balearic archipelagoes not included here). The 90% confidence intervals of these estimates, both at the national and regional scales, were also calculated as indication of their relative precision.

After a chapter in which the census and data analysis methods are explained, the main body of the publication consist of the species accounts. For each of the 95 species considered following information is presented in tables: the national population numbers, numbers for each Autonomous Region and their percentage to the total, and the 90% confidence intervals of the estimates and the density/km² in the most important habitat types used by each species.

In a short text a summary is given of the information shown in the tables. More detailed figures on the densities in various habitats are presented at the end in several annexes.

The sample size was 12 030 point-counts over all the administrative provinces of peninsular Spain. There is a mean of 802 point-counts/region, with minimum in Murcia (243) and a maximum in Castilla y León (2708). The 95 species considered in the study averaged 1228 occurrences across the 12 030 samples, ranging widely between 24-39 (Whinchat, Hawfinch, Common Redstart) and 4104-5234 (House Sparrow, European Serin, Blackbird). This variability in occurrence, a reflection of actual ecological rarity of each species in Spain, is directly related to the accurateness of the estimated population sizes. After calculating their detectability indexes, the mean field abundance of each species in 23 main environments was parameterized by means of bootstrapping methods, allowing to obtain absolute densities at the national/regional scales.

The average population estimates calculated here are highly reliable, because: 1) the confidence intervals linked to mean population sizes entail reasonably narrow margins of variation; 2) the regional estimates for Catalonia are highly similar to those previously suggested in a study based on completely different data and analyses. It must be noted that the population sizes presented do not include



populations breeding above 1500 m altitude, however, for most of the species considered these populations are negligible. The five most abundant species of the 95 considered are House Sparrow (163 450 000 individuals), Black Starling (52 700 000), Greenfinch (35 730 000), Goldfinch (34 380 000) and Crested Lark (31 450 000). Only one species could be considered "Near Threatened" according to the criteria of the UICN: the Dartford Warbler. Its vulnerability relates to a recent population decline, which most probably is the result of natural reforestation of scarcely vegetated areas in Spain.
