



Asian Houbara (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*)

Annex 1

Region 5: Southwest Asia

BUSTARD
Multi-species Action Plan

COUNTRY: Bahrain

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	2 – 4 ind.	Unknown	N/A	CR	Protected	Wintering	Oct-Feb	S Bahrain	M: Disturbance; Poaching	Identify habitat most frequently visited by winter Houbara and provide protection from disturbance. When captive-bred Houbara are imported for hunting, release the birds only in time frames during which wild migrant Houbara will not be accidentally hunted. Engage hunters and run media campaigns against illegal hunting abroad.

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COUNTRY: Iraq

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	<60 breeding ind.	Declining	N/A	CR	Protected	Rare breeding; Migrant, Wintering	Wintering: Oct-Apr Uncertain breeding dates	Darbandikhan; Erbil steppe; Al Najaf; Salman; Jazman; Shuweicha Marsh; Dalmaj Marsh; Hoshiya and Saaroot; Teeb Oasis and Zubaidaat; Suwaibaat; Shuweicha Marsh; Jazman (Zurbatia); Sawa Lake and Area; Teab Seasonal Wetlands	C: Poaching (Sport hunting); Illegal trade (Live birds for falconry) M: Habitat loss and degradation	Monitor both breeding and wintering populations. Establish protected areas and enhanced protection for fragile breeding populations. Iraq lies on a key migratory route for Houbara, with the some of the highest recorded hunting losses regionally. Protecting passage and wintering birds from hunting is critical to conserve Houbara populations across their range. In key sites, support habitat restoration and improve anti-poaching enforcement. Conduct outreach with hunter communities and other relevant communities.
Little Bustard	10 – 100 ind. (2025)	Unknown (Noted now in small numbers after period of absence)	N/A	N/A	Protected	Rare vagrant, Rare wintering	Mar-May	Tanjero River; Erbil; Dukan Lake IBA	C: Poaching M: Habitat loss and degradation; Agricultural intensification	Develop a monitoring program to detect wintering birds. Strengthen enforcement of hunting laws, especially during months of this species’ presence in the countries. Undertake conservation measures at key habitats, and consider establishing protected areas at these.
Great Bustard	Unknown	Declining (Wintering), Breeding population extinct	N/A	N/A	Protected	Rare wintering, Extinct as breeder	Jan	Bred in NW Iraq; Mosul Steppe; Erbil Steppe	C: Poaching M: Habitat loss and degradation, Agricultural intensification	Monitor and provide protection for any individuals detected in the country.

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COUNTRY: Israel

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	150 – 200 breeding ind.	Stable/Declining (Breeding)	EN	CR	Protected	Resident populations; also receives winter visitors	Year-round	Nizzana-Ezuz; N Negev Corridor; W Negev IBA; Hatzerim; Hameishar; Cliffs of Zin	H: Habitat loss (Afforestation, Infrastructure developments); Agricultural intensification; Anthropogenically subsidized predation; Collision (Overhead cabling) M: Habitat degradation (Overgrazing) Loc: Poaching	Improve sanitation at breeding sites to reduce anthropogenically increased levels of nest predators, such as corvids and canids. Underground or re-route powerlines in the northern Negev migratory corridor to reduce collisions and proactively route new lines away from sensitive areas. Maintain suitable habitat in northern Negev requires limiting conversion of land to intensive agriculture such as irrigated fields and orchards. Limit grazing at important sites for this species. Do not undertake afforestation in important habitat, and reverse any afforestation that has previously been undertaken in natural grass and scrubland habitat. Underground or reroute powerlines at which collisions have repeatedly occurred, such as Nizzana-Shivta.
	400 – 600 wintering ind.	Declining (Wintering)								

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COUNTRY: Jordan

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	1 – 5 ind. observed in winter, unclear whether these are birds from releases for hunting	Declining	N/A	CR	Protected	Rare wintering, Formerly breeding	Oct-Mar	Wadi Araba; Ruweished Desert; Wadi Sirhan; Wadi Bayer; Shaumari Reserve; Wadi Ghadaf; Azraq IBA; Burqu' Reserve	C: Poaching; Unsustainable take M: Habitat loss; Agricultural intensification; Habitat degradation (Overgrazing)	Establish a comprehensive plan to regulate hunting, including species monitoring, anti-poaching enforcement, and raising awareness of hunters. If captive-bred Houbara are imported for hunting, undertake hunting activities during times and in places where wild migrants will not be impacted. Establish strictly protected areas with habitat suitable for Houbara to allow the re-establishment of breeding populations.
Little Bustard	1 – 10 ind. (2025)	Unknown	N/A	N/A	Protected	Rare vagrant, Rare wintering	Oct-Dec	Burqu’ Reserve	H: Poaching	Undertake hunter education programs. Monitor sites along NW borders for presence of wintering birds and provide protection.

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COUNTRY: Kuwait

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	1 – 14 ind. recorded per winter; likely released from breeding centers. More unrecorded birds believed to cross Kuwait in passage	Extinct (Breeding); Declining (Migrant)	N/A	CR	Purchasable hunting permits in designated areas	Extinct as possible breeder. Declining numbers in winter	Oct-Feb	Sabah Al-Ahmad PA; Al-Liyah PA; Sandy and sparsely vegetated habitats across Kuwait	C: Poaching (Sport hunting) H: Collisions (Energy infrastructure) M: Illegal trade (Live birds for falconry); Habitat loss (Land-use change, Urbanization); Habitat degradation (Overgrazing)	In suitable habitats: 1) enhance anti-poaching enforcement during winter months; 2) reduce human disturbance from camping and grazing; 3) underground or reroute powerlines at key habitats and where mortalities occur. If captive-bred birds are used for sport hunting, conduct releases and hunting at locations and times of year when wild migrants will not be affected. Ensure that imports of houbara intended for hunting are labeled with appropriate CITES purpose codes. Engage hunters and run media campaigns against illegal hunting abroad.

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COUNTRY: Lebanon

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Little Bustard	5– 50 ind.	Unknown	N/A	CR	Protected	Rare migrant	Nov-Dec	N Beqaa Valley; Akkar Plain; N Coastal Plains; Lowland Plains	C: Poaching	Monitor for and record observances of this species, as well as bustard species which are noted as vagrants in Lebanon (Asian Houbara and Great Bustard). Undertake outreach in hunting community to raise awareness and identification of these rare birds. Improve enforcement of anti-hunting laws.

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COUNTRY: Oman

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	Resident population may be extinct; wintering birds rare	Steep decline	N/A	CR	Protected	Rare wintering, Formerly common resident	Aug-Mar	Jiddat al Harasis IBA & central desert (Rare resident); NE Coast & Khawr Dhirif (Wintering birds)	Unknown	Field work to determine extent of remaining breeding population. Protect from hunting and overgrazing at most important sites.

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COUNTRY: Palestine

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	Not observed	Unknown	N/A	CR	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	U: Habitat loss	Unknown

COUNTRY: Qatar

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	Unknown, perhaps dozens of birds per winter	Declining	N/A	CR	Falconry permitted in pursuit of captive bred birds in winter	Wintering	Oct-Feb	Natural areas of the peninsula	C: Unsustainable hunting	Restrict hunting of released captive-bred birds to areas without wild migrants. Monitor and regulate captive breeding to ensure breeding stock is properly sourced. Strengthen customs to curb illegal imports. Ensure that imports of houbara intended for hunting are labeled with appropriate CITES purpose codes. Engage hunters and run media campaigns against illegal hunting abroad.

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COUNTRY: Saudi Arabia

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Little Bustard	5 ind. (2025)	Unknown	N/A	N/A	Protected	Rare wintering	Oct-Jan	N Borders Region; Umluj	C: Poaching	Undertake awareness raising among hunting community about conservation of these rare birds. Enforce existing hunting regulations, particularly in winter on northern borders.
Asian Houbara	~140 resident ind. of captive-bred lineages Wintering: >300 ind. wild and captive-bred birds	Declining (Migrant and Wintering); Wild breeding lineages may be extinct	N/A	CR	Wild birds protected by law; Hunting of captive bred birds in winter in designated areas	Migrant, Wintering, Formerly also wild residents. Currently, introduced resident population	Residents: year-round Wintering: Nov-Jan	Breeding: Introduced population at Imam Saud bin Abdulaziz Royal NR (formerly Mahazat As-Sayd PA) Last known breeding sites of wild birds in Harrat A-Harrah; AlTaisyah in Imam Turki bin Abdullah Royal NR, and N border region Wintering: N border area and E coastline	C: Poaching (Falconry) H: Habitat degradation (Overgrazing, Off-road vehicle use) M: Habitat loss (Resource extraction)	Regulate hunting and releases of captive-bred birds to avoid impacts on wild and reintroduced populations. Engage with the falconry community to promote sustainable practices. Engage hunters and conduct media campaigns against illegal hunting abroad. Strengthen protection of the eastern coastal region by establishing a 20 km inland buffer to protect winter migrants. Ensure that imports of houbara intended for hunting are labeled with appropriate CITES purpose codes. Limit grazing and avoid afforestation in key habitats to support natural vegetation. Maintain habitat and protection in Imam Saud bin Abdulaziz RNR for the introduced population. Carefully site new powerlines to avoid disrupting movement between reintroduction areas. Avoid destruction of key habitats by carefully siting renewable energy installations. Establish a National Action Plan to coordinate conservation efforts at a national level.
Arabian Bustard	Last observation in 2018, on Farasan Island	Breeding likely extinct Non-breeding: Steep decline	N/A	CR	Protected	Formerly breeding on mainland; now only non-breeding	Irregular	Farasan Island: Al-Kabir Tihama Coast: Al-Habrow al-Arabi’ IBA; Faj Al Khail (E of Al Lith); Khabt Khamis Harb; Wadi Hali; Wadi Aramram; Jebel Lababa	C: Poaching (accelerated by road development); Illegal trade (Recipient) M: Habitat degradation (Overgrazing, Land-use change); Habitat loss (Infrastructure developments)	Urgently survey habitats and historical records to determine the status of the species and location of suitable remaining habitat. Reintroduce birds currently held in captivity to Farasan Island and monitor their survival and movements. In Tihama, establish protected area, ideally at the last areas inhabited by this species. Undertake active habitat restoration, restrict human activity, and greatly increase antipoaching patrols in preparation for a possible future reintroduction in this mainland area. Prevent trade of Arabian Bustards across the Saudi Arabia-Yemen border.

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COUNTRY: Syrian Arab Republic

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	Unknown	Steep decline	N/A	CR	Protected	Wintering, Breeding populations likely extinct	Sep-Mar	Al-Badia; Al-Jazira; Buhayrat al-Khatuniyah; Tadmur Desert; Jabal Sis	C: Poaching M: Habitat loss and degradation (Overgrazing; Land-use change); Lack of awareness	Undertake public awareness campaigns. Enforce existing strict penalties for illegal hunting, focusing on core habitats in winter months. Establish protected areas in key areas and restore habitat.
Little Bustard	10 – 100 ind. (2025)	Declining	N/A	N/A	Protected	Rare wintering, Rare migrant, Formerly breeding (until 1960)	Oct-Dec	Al-Jazira; Wadi al-Azib; Tadmur Desert; Bahrat Homs; S Coastal Region	C: Poaching H: Habitat loss (Land-use change) M: Habitat degradation (Overgrazing)	Undertake outreach in the hunting community to increase awareness of this species. Enforce existing strict penalties for illegal hunting, focusing on core habitats in winter months. Protect key grassland habitats from agricultural encroachment and intensification.
Great Bustard	Unknown	Steep decline	N/A	N/A	Protected	Rare wintering, Breeding population extinct	Oct-Feb	Al Jazira; Ras al-Ayn; Tual al-'Abba	C: Poaching	Monitor for any appearance of this species, particularly in winter. Strictly enforce hunting laws.

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COUNTRY: Türkiye

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Great Bustard	559 – 780 ind. (2021)	Declining	EN	LC (Europe)	Protected	Breeding, Wintering	Year-round	Aliken IBA; Acıgöl Basin; Dazkırı Basin; Polatlı TİGEM IBA; Tuz Gölü IBA; Seyfe Lake; Yüksekova; Altıntaş Plateau; Aliken; Çöl Lake; Çalıkdüzü; Bulanık and Malazgirt Plains; Samsam Lake; Upper Murat Valley; Muş Plain; Sarayönü; Yenipazar; Ceylanpınar; Bismil Plain; Karasu Plain; Patnos; Kavuştuk Peninsula; Van Plains	C: Poaching; Legal obstacles; Anthropogenic disturbance (Agriculture, Grazing) H: Agricultural intensification (Irrigation, Chemical application); Habitat loss (Conversion of grasslands); Habitat degradation (Unsustainable water use, Overgrazing); Climate change (Loss of freshwater, Desertification); Lack of awareness M: Collision (Overhead cabling); Anthropogenically subsidized predation (Dogs) Expected in coming years: Increased collision (Overhead cabling); Habitat loss (Energy infrastructure)	Urgently monitor remaining breeding populations, some of which may be nearing extirpation. Establish protected areas and work with farming community to ensure agriculture is compatible with breeding success of bustards. Remove or underground power lines at key sites and avoid new energy infrastructure in important habitats or movement corridors. Strengthen anti-poaching efforts through increased wardening at key sites. Raise public awareness.
Little Bustard	10 – 20 breeding ind., 250 – 400 migrating ind., 100 – 200 wintering ind. (2025)	Declining, with rare irruptions bringing more winter visitors	CR	VU (Europe)	Protected	Breeding, Migrant, Wintering	Year-round, Breeding May-Aug	Aliken IBA; Polatlı TİGEM; Acıgöl Basin & Dazkırı IBA; and Tuz Gölü IBA; Muş Plain IBA; Göksu Delta IBA	C: Poaching H: Habitat loss (Land-use change); Agricultural intensification M: Habitat degradation (Overgrazing and overuse of water resources)	Urgently monitor and assess threats at the few remaining breeding sites of this species. Restore and maintain suitable habitats at these breeding sites, and consider establishment of protected areas. For wintering birds, provide seasonal protection against hunting and disturbance at key sites.

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COUNTRY: United Arab Emirates

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	Wintering: 50 – 75 ind. Introduced breeding population reproduces with low levels of success; Population is supported by irrigation, plantations, and releases of captive-bred birds	Declining	CR (UAE); EN (Abu Dhabi Emirate)	CR	Falconry allowed by license using captive bred birds in winter in designated areas	Wintering, Introduced breeding population	Wintering: Nov-Feb	Coastal Areas; Khor; Dubai Desert; Al-Houbari IBA (Baynunah and Tawi Reserves); Al Marmoom Desert	C: Poaching M: Habitat loss and degradation (Infrastructure developments)	Enforce anti-hunting laws along the coast during winter migration season. Ensure that releases of captive-bred birds for hunting are conducted at locations and times of year such that wild migrant birds will not be affected. Engage hunters and run media campaigns against illegal hunting abroad.

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COUNTRY: Yemen

Species	Population Size	Population trend	National Red List status	Regional Red List status	National Protection Status	Presence in Country	Months of presence	Key sites	Key Threats	Priority Actions
Asian Houbara	40 – 100 ind.	Declining	N/A	CR	Not protected	Breeding, Migrant, Wintering	Breeding: Year-round Wintering: Oct-Mar	Desert W of Al-Ghayda; Al Darw; E of Hadhramout; Shabwah; Maifa’a	H: Habitat loss and degradation M: Unsustainable hunting (Sport); Legal and illegal trade in live birds (For falconry and breeding facilities) U: Anthropogenically increased predation (Corvids)	Enhance law enforcement to curb bird hunting, capture, and egg collection, and trade in eggs and birds near the northern border. Promote community awareness in agricultural areas to support conservation and sustainable land use. Establish long-term monitoring of breeding populations and ensure the survival and genetic integrity of the distinct Yemen population.
Arabian Bustard	20 – 100 ind.	Declining	Unknown	CR	Not protected	Resident	Year-round	Al Kadan IBA; Bajel & Qetfzumila; Al Qutay & Al Murah IBA; Al Marufiyah; Wadi Mawr - Al Zuhrah; Hiswat Al Hugayma	C: Illegal trade (Live birds and eggs); Agricultural intensification (Irrigation, Chemical application) M: Anthropogenically subsidized predation (Dogs)	Enhance law enforcement to curb bird hunting, capture, and egg collection, and trade in eggs and birds near the northern border. Promote community awareness and livelihoods in agricultural areas to support conservation and sustainable land use.

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