GLOBAL INVASIVE SPECIES DATABASE

FULL ACCOUNT FOR: ***Sturnus vulgaris***

Sturnus vulgaris 简体中文 正體中文

System: Terrestrial

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Aves	Passeriformes	Sturnidae

Common name etourneau sansonnet (French, France), English starling (English), European starling (English), estornino pinto (Spanish, Spain), blackbird (English, USA), common starling (English), étourneau sansonnet (French), Europäischer Star (German)

Synonym

Similar species *Molothrus aeneus, Quiscalus quiscula, Agelaius phoeniceus, Turdus merula*

Summary Native to Europe, Asia and North Africa, Sturnus vulgaris (the European starling) has been introduced globally, save in neotropic regions. The starling prefers lowland habitats and is an aggressive omnivore. Sturnus vulgaris cost hundreds of millions of dollars in agricultural damage each year and contribute to the decline of local native bird species through competition for resources and nesting spaces.

view this species on IUCN Red List

Species Description
The European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) is a small bird approximately 21.5cm, long and weighing around 70 to 100grms. Iridescent green glossed feathers cover the nape, breast and back of the bird, while the wings are black, sometimes with a green or purple veneer. During the winter white flecking may appear on the starling's breast. (Chow, 2000)

Notes
European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) often form huge flocks of upwards of 3,000 birds.

Lifecycle Stages
Eggs incubate in the nest for up to 15 days. The juvenile European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) will stay in the nest for 21 to 23 days and may continue to beg parents for food for a few days after leaving the nest. Banding studies have shown that European starlings can live up to 21 years in the wild. (Chow, 2000, CWBO, 2004)

Uses
European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) play an active role in the control of insect populations. Many people also consider the starling to be aesthetically pleasing, and keep them as pets. (Adeney, 2001)

Habitat Description
European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) prefer lowland habitats to more mountainous terrain. They are secondary cavity nesters, using extant cracks, crevices, and cavities created by other species. During breeding season the European starling requires holes for nesting and vegetation fields for feeding. The rest of the year it will utilise a wider range of habitats from moorland to salt marshes. European starlings are highly adaptable when selecting nest hollows, e.g. fence posts, roof linings under guttering (there has been an observation of a starling nest in the wool of a live sheep) (John Tracey, pers.comm., 2004)

Reproduction
Reproduction is sexual; oviparous. Breeding season in the Northern Hemisphere generally begins late March and runs through to early July. The southern hemisphere breeding season runs between September and December. European starling clutches contain between 4-6 blue-green eggs. Females may lay as many as three clutches in a single breeding season. (Kern, 2003, Chow, 2000)

Nutrition
European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) are omnivores and subsist mainly on seeds, insects, invertebrates, plants and fruit. (Chow, 2000)

General Impacts
European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) cause damage to agricultural crops. When significant numbers are present starling flocks may descend on fruit and grain crop fields to forage, causing massive damage and can have a heavy economic effect. European starlings are extremely aggressive omnivores, and will compete with native fauna for food. Open bill probing is most commonly used for ground invertebrates, which is their preferred food. Hence this provides the European starling with an evolutionary advantage over frugivores. Fruit damage is often found to be caused by a higher proportion of juveniles, which have underdeveloped probing skills. Usurping nests by contamination (as well as physical competition) is also a major problem (e.g. native parrots use little, if any, bedding, whereas starlings will rapidly fill and contaminate tree hollows). European starlings are also a public nuisance and can damage infrastructures, roof linings, etc. and negatively effect aesthetics (Weber 1979).

Management Info
Physical: Manual methods such as exclusion, trapping, and shooting have been employed in an attempt to control European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) populations. Mechanical controls include scaring with the use of sonic devices. (Adeney, 2001; Kern, 2003).

Pathway
European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) were introduced to New Zealand to control local insect populationsEuropean starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) were allegedly introduced to the U.S. as part of a movement to introduce all the birds of Shakespeare to the States.People may move European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) to new areas by taking their pet birds with them.Introduced by acclimatisation societies.

Principal source: Long, J. L., 1981. Introduced Birds of the World. Reed, Sydney.
Weber, W. J., 1979. Health hazards from pigeons, starlings and English sparrows. Thomson Publications, California.

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ALIEN RANGE

[2] AUSTRALIA
[1] BOTSWANA
[1] NEW ZEALAND
[5] UNITED STATES
[1] BERMUDA
[2] CANADA
[1] NORTH AMERICA

Red List assessed species 12: CR = 1; EN = 3; VU = 3; LC = 5;

Colaptes auratus **LC**
Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae **VU**
Melanerpes carolinus **LC**
Melanerpes uropygialis **LC**
Polytelis swainsonii **VU**
Tachycineta cyaneoviridis **EN**
Cyanoramphus cookii **EN**
Lathamus discolor **EN**
Melanerpes erythrocephalus **LC**
Neophema chrysogaster **CR**
Sphyrapicus varius **LC**
Tachycineta euchrysea **VU**

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29 references found for **Sturnus vulgaris**

Managment information

Airola, Daniel A; Grantham, Jesse. Jones and Stokes, Purple Martin population status, nesting habitat characteristics, and management in Sacramento, California Western Birds. 34(4). 2003. 235-251.
Summary: Impacts of Starling population on purple martin population.

Bomford, M., 2003. Risk Assessment for the Import and Keeping of Exotic Vertebrates in Australia. Bureau of Rural Sciences, Canberra.
Summary: Available from: http://www.feral.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/PC12803.pdf [Accessed August 19 2010]

Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (WA), 2007. Starling updates
Summary: Available from: http://www.agric.wa.gov.au/content/pw/vp/bird/starlings.htm [Accessed 13 February 2008]

James, Francis C. 1997, Nonindigenous Birds. Pages 139-156 in Daniel Simberloff, Don C. Schmitz, Tom C. Brown, editors. Strangers in Paradise Impact and Management of Nonindigenous Species in Florida. Island Press, Washington D.C. 360 pp.
Summary: Chapter on nonindigenous bird species in Florida. Contains information on Management

Kern, William J. 2004. European Starling.
Summary: A website with basic ecology information as well as economic and health impacts of the starling. This site also details several methods of control.

Mack, R. N and W. M. Lonsdale., 2002. Eradicating invasive plants: Hard-won lessons for islands. In *Turning the tide: the eradication of invasive species*: 311-318. Veitch, C.R. and Clout, M.N.(eds). IUCN SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group. IUCN. Gland. Switzerland and Cambridge. UK.
Summary: Uses *Clidemia hirta* in Hawaii as an eradication case study. *Clidemia* is in the Melastomataceae and somewhat similar ecologically to miconia.

Eradication case study in Turning the tide: the eradication of invasive species.

Murray, C. and C. Pinkham. 2002. Towards a Decision Support Tool to Address Invasive Species in Garry Oak & Associated Ecosystems in BC. Prepared by ESSA Technologies Ltd., Victoria, B.C. for the GOERT Invasive Species Steering Committee, Victoria, 96 pp.
Summary: Available from: http://www.goert.ca/documents/GOEDSTreport.pdf [Accessed 13 February 2008]

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Summary: Eradication case study in Turning the tide: the eradication of invasive species.

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Summary: Notes on starlings as carriers of avian influenza virus.

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Available from: http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3660 [Accessed 10 November 2009]

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Summary: Review of the confirmed and potential human health risks of pigeons, starlings and sparrows.

WWF-Australia, Undated. Starling factsheet
Summary: This document seeks to inform Western Australians about the threat posed by starlings, with the hope of increasing community surveillance efforts and reporting of starling sightings.
Available from: http://wwf.org.au/publications/starling-factsheet/ [Accessed 13 February 2008]

General information

Adeney, Jennifer Marion. 2001. Introduced Species Summary Project: European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).
Summary: A website with good information on ecology, and control methods of the starling. Contains several photos of starlings as well.
Available from: http://www.columbia.edu/itc/cerc/danoff-burg/invasion_bio/inv_spp_summ/Sturnus_vulgaris.html [Accessed August 11, 2004].

Chipper Woods Bird Observatory. 2004. European Starling: *Sturnus vulgaris* banded 12 December 1998.
Summary: This site has detailed photographs of starling morphology. Summary information on basic ecology and conservation efforts is also included.
Available from: http://www.wbu.com/chipperwoods/photos/estarling.htm [Accessed August 11, 2004]

Chow, J. 2000. *Sturnus vulgaris* (On-line), Animal Diversity Web.
Summary: This comprehensive sight reviews ecology and impacts. It contains several good images as well.
Available from: http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Sturnus_vulgaris.html [Accessed August 11, 2004] .

Clergeau P., 1986. L��tourneau sansonnet. Payot Lausanne ed., Lausanne.
CONABIO. 2008. Sistema de informaci�n sobre especies invasoras en M�xico. Especies invasoras - Aves. Comisi�n Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad. Fecha de acceso.
Summary: English:
The species list sheet for the Mexican information system on invasive species currently provides information related to Scientific names, family, group and common names, as well as habitat, status of invasion in Mexico, pathways of introduction and links to other specialised websites. Some of the higher risk species already have a direct link to the alert page. It is important to notice that these lists are constantly being updated, please refer to the main page (http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Portada), under the section Novedades for information on updates.
Invasive species - birds is available from: http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Especies_invasoras_-_Aves [Accessed 30 July 2008]
Spanish:
La lista de especies del Sistema de informaci�n sobre especies invasoras de m�xico cuenta actualmente con informaci�n aceca de nombre cient�fico, familia, grupo y nombre com�n, as� como h�bitat, estado de la invasi�n en M�xico, rutas de introducci�n y ligas a otros sitios especializados. Algunas de las especies de mayor riesgo ya tienen una liga directa a la p�gina de alertas. Es importante resaltar que estas listas se encuentran en constante proceso de actualizaci�n, por favor consulte la portada (http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Portada), en la secci�n novedades, para conocer los cambios.
Especies invasoras - Aves is available from: http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Especies_invasoras_-_Aves [Accessed 30 July 2008]
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Georgia Wildlife Web. 2000. Perching Birds: European Starling, *Sturnus vulgaris*. Accessed August 11, 2004.
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Summary: This site has a short summary of physical description, potential impacts in the local area and basic ecology of the starling. Available from: http://nis.gsmfc.org/nis_factsheet.php?toc_id=212 [Accessed August 11, 2004].
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Available from: http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/itisca/taxastep?king=every&p_action=containing&taxa=Sturnus+vulgaris&p_format=&p_ifx=plglt&p_lang= [Accessed March 2005]
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Summary: Study done to determine differences in male starling mating behavior in relation to clutch size. And parental practices of male starlings when polygynous.
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Summary: Detailed information on the introductions of introduced birds of the world
Nephew, Benjamin C., L. Romero. 2003. Behavioral, physiological, and endocrine responses of starlings to acute increases in density. Hormones and Behavior 44(3): 222-232
Summary: Study done of starling behavioral aggression with numerous individuals in a confined space.
Olsson, Ola, Mans Bruun, and Henrik G. Smith. June 2002. Starling Foraging Success In Relation to Agricultural Land Use. Ecography 25 (3) 363-
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