

Fourth Meeting of the Signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*)

Bad Belzig, Germany, 14 – 15 March 2018

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REPORT FROM ITALY

- **Population status and trend:** vagrant in Italy. A total of over 160 observations exist across the historical Italian literature and museum collections, mostly during the winter months and with a majority from the Po plains area. Particularly harsh winters correlate with relatively higher frequency of observations. As a general trend, the frequency of observations has decreased since the '70ies, with a temporal correlation with the decrease in European breeding populations. No observation reported between 1973-1986. Most observations refer to single birds, with rare cases of 2-5 inds. and record numbers in Friuli (ca. 15 inds., February 1908) and Tuscany (16 inds., January 1968). Scattered and few observations in Sicily, where no longer recorded after '50ies. In Sardinia a single observation in 1967 nearby Cagliari. In Apulia 1 bird in January 1970. In Basilicata a single record in 2002. In Marche 1 bird was collected in December 1882. More to the north, in Liguria 2 birds collected in December 1812. From an historical perspective and till 2000, 7 birds from Piedmont and ca. 20 from Lombardy. Relatively recent records from Friuli in 1977, 1987, 1993-1994 (when 2 inds. In the Province of Udine). In Emilia-Romagna single birds in December 1909 and February 1918, with the observation from in the winter 1969. In the same winter, 3 inds. reported from Brescia Province in Lombardy. Most recent observation in Italy 2006, with a single individual in Lombardy.
- **Population Potential:** NA
- **Country-specific threats:** intensive agriculture across most plains in different regions of Italy may have contributed to offer progressively less suitable staging areas for the rare visitors.
- **Country-specific actions:** NA
- **Cross-border cooperation:** decline in observations in Italy might be correlated to decrease in population size in Central and Eastern Europe. Conservation efforts hopefully leading to populations recovery in these countries might offer increasing chances for birds moving across and staging in Italy.

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Source:

- Brichetti P., Fracasso G., 2004. Ornitologia Italiana. Vol. 2 – Tetraonidae – Scolopacidae. Alberto Perdisa Ed., Bologna.
- ISPRA Zool. Collection, Ozzano Emilia. A. De Faveri *in litteris*.