

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2016.024.023](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2016.024.023)

OLGA CHRISTOPOULOU

Department of Planning and Regional Development, University of Thessaly, Greece

ATHANASSIOS SFOUGARIS

Department of Agriculture Crop Production and Rural Environment, University of Thessaly, Greece

VIEWS AND ATTITUDES OF FARMERS/LIVESTOCK BREEDERS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY CONCERNING CONSERVATION OF THE LESSER KE

Abstract:

The Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*) is classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List and the Red Data Book of Greece and listed in Annex I of the EU Wild Birds Directive. The species is a migratory small falcon wintering in Africa, south of Sahara and breeding from south Europe, through Balkans and Turkey, to central Asia. It breeds colonially in buildings inside the villages and feeds on insects (mainly large Orthoptera) in farmland, grasslands, meadows and fallow land. The main part of its population in Greece breeds in the villages of Thessaly plain. It interacts with inhabitants in the nesting sites and farmers and livestock breeders in farms and grasslands/meadows, receiving the effects of applied farming practices. Species ecology depends on the activities of the local population, so their actions and opinions are critical to its conservation and survival. Purpose of the study was to investigate the awareness and attitudes of farmers, livestock breeders and local people regarding practices affecting the conservation of the species. The study took place in villages hosting the most numerous colonies of the species. A number of 250 farmers, livestock breeders and local people were interviewed through a questionnaire structured on 25 questions, 5 of which were asking personal information, while the rest 20 the following data: a) awareness about the species protection status, b) adoption of particular rules on agricultural and livestock practices set by the Life Project concerning the Lesser Kestrel, c) voluntary contribution to conservation activities for the species. Out of 250 questionnaires distributed, 210 were valid. The general conclusion was that the majority of the people interviewed was aware of the species breeding and feeding needs and has a positive attitude to the presence of the species in their farms and buildings. Moreover, they are willing to apply practices that contribute to securing further favourable conditions for the species.

Keywords:

Lesser kestrel, farmers, views, attitudes

JEL Classification: Q19