

## **ABSTRACT**

Waterbird research has grown in importance over the decades, attracting both professional and public interest due to its fascinating nature. Historical records of waterbird abundance have allowed the analysis of population trends and the identification of potential aberrations. Europe is an important region for many breeding and wintering species, providing a wide range of suitable habitats throughout the year. Several wildfowl and diver species, but also common waders, wading birds or cormorants exhibited a long-term stable or increasing population trends. The most decreasing trends were reported for some diving ducks, grebes and grassland-nesting waders. Despite reports of apparent declines in waterbird populations, the identification of ecological causes is complex due to the diverse characteristics of different waterbird species, making this a broad and complex topic to investigate. From the mentioned ecological drivers, habitat loss has the most negative impact on waders, whilst climate change could be associated with the shifting of breeding and wintering ranges. The birds breeding on wet grasslands were mostly affected by modern agriculture, and nowadays, their populations are threatened.

## **KEYWORDS**

wetland birds, non-passerines, population dynamics, Europe, conservation biology