

SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET

Talitrus saltator

English name: Sand hopper	Scientific name: <i>Talitrus saltator</i>	
Taxonomical group: Class: Malacostraca Order: Amphipoda Family: Talitridae	Species authority: Montagu, 1808	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: <i>Talitrus locustra</i> Sars, 1890	Generation length: females 1,5 year males 21 months	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Tourism (cleaning of beaches; G05.05)	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Tourism (cleaning of beaches; G05.05)	
IUCN Criteria: –	HELCOM Red List Category:	DD Data Deficient
Global / European IUCN Red List Category: NE/NE	Habitats Directive: –	
Protection and Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark –/–, Estonia –/–, Finland –/–, Germany –/2 (Endangered, incl. North Sea, Latvia –/–, Lithuania –/–, Poland strictly protected by law/–, Russia –/–, Sweden –/–		

Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

The species inhabits supralittoral sandy beaches in the southern and western Baltic Sea (Trave Estuary, Greifswald Lagoon, Rugia Lagoons, Polish coast, Curonian Lagoon). As the habitat is under pressure by tourism and the species has been found sensitive to the side-effects of tourism, e.g. trampling and cleaning of algal belts from beaches, it is likely that the population has declined.

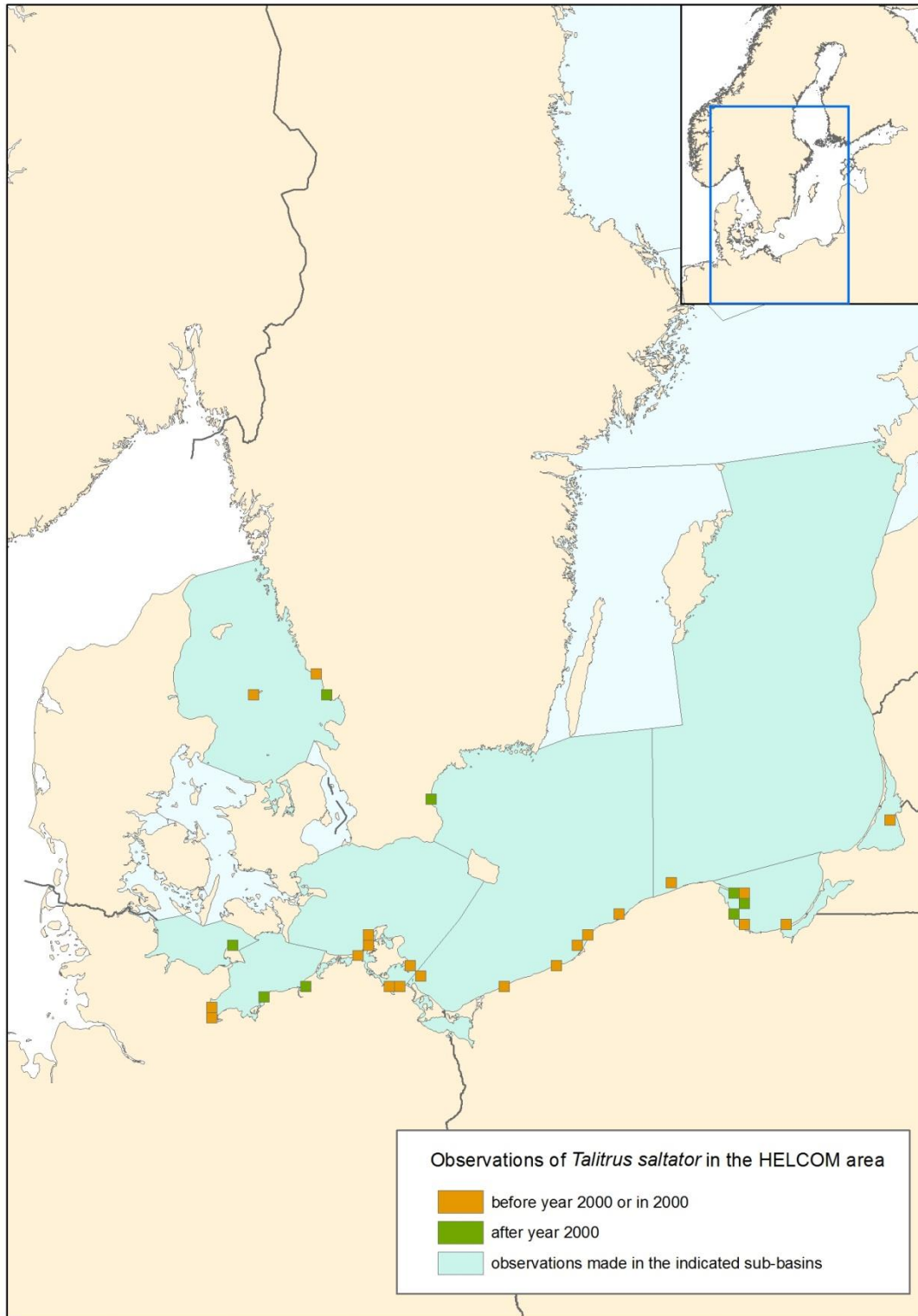
Outside the HELCOM area the species can be found in the north-eastern Atlantic and North Sea, as well as along European coasts from southern Norway to the western Mediterranean.

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Distribution map

The georeferenced records of species compiled from the databases of the Swedish Species Information Centre (Artportalen) and the Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research (IOW), and from Zaddach (1844), Drzycimski & Nawodzinska (1965), and Weslawski et al. (2000).



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Habitat and ecology

Talitrus saltator is a supralittoral amphipod that inhabits sandy beaches and can be found beneath or among debris and decaying algae that is deposited at the high water mark (MarLin). During the day, *T. saltator* is found buried 10–30 cm in the substratum, and at night it emerges to forage on algae.

Description of major threats

The species is sensitive to anthropogenic pressures, e.g. in the form of beach tourism, which causes trampling in its habitats. Tourism usually also means that the beach is kept clean, i.e. the decaying algae, which serve as the habitat for the species, are removed. It has also been indicated to be sensitive to both synthetic compound and hydrocarbon contamination.

Assessment justification

The occurrences are poorly known except in Poland where there has been a targeted inventory on the species. According to Polish studies (information from Jan Marcin Weslawski) *Talitrus saltator* is sensitive to increased antropogenic pressure in the form of tourism. It is not known how rare the species actually is. Suitable and abundant habitats should be available e.g. on Danish and German coast. However, in Germany where the species has been specifically looked for it has been found only in three locations, which implies that it may after all be rather rare. There is very little data on the distribution of the species in Sweden and Denmark and no information on possible trends. However, it is quite likely although not sure that the population of the species experiences similar pressure due to beach tourism also in other countries besides Poland. The species is protected by law in Poland. Due to the lack of data the species is categorized as Data Deficient (DD) in the HELCOM area.

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

If beach tourism is an essential threat for the species, it would probably benefit from restrictions of use for parts of sandy beaches, and from zones where cleaning would be less efficient.

Common names

Denmark: lys sandhopper, Estonia: –, Finland: –, Germany: Strandfloh, Latvia: –, Lithuania: –, Poland: zmieraczek plażowy, Russia: –, Sweden: –

References

- Budd, G. 2005. *Talitrus saltator*. A sand hopper. Marine Life Information Network: Biology and Sensitivity Key Information Sub-programme [on-line]. Plymouth: Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom. [cited 07/08/2012]. Available at <http://www.marlin.ac.uk/generalbiology.php?speciesID=4417>
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- Rachor, E., Bönsch, R., Boos, K., Gosselck, F., Grotjahn, M., Günther, C.-P., Gusky, M., Gutow, L., Heiber, W., Jantschik, P., Krieg, H.-J., Krone, R., Nehmer, P., Reichert, K., Reiss, H., Schröder, A., Witt, J. & Zettler, M. L. 2012. Rote Liste und Artenliste der bodenlebenden wirbellosen Meerestiere. Vierte Fassung, Stand Dezember 2007, einzelne Aktualisierungen bis 2012. Naturschutz und Biologische Vielfalt 70(2). Bundesamt für Naturschutz.
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